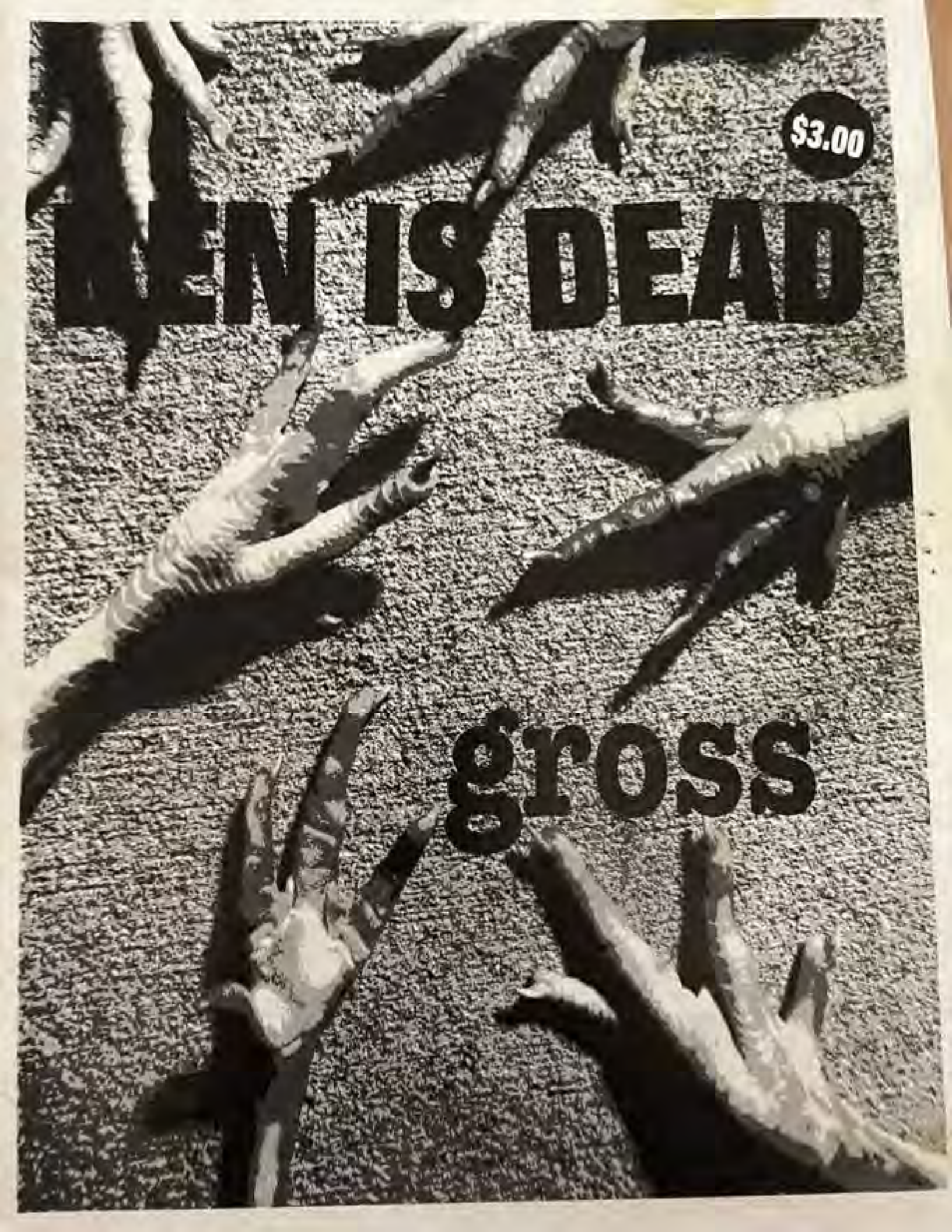




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WHEN IS DEAD

gross

95% OF BEN IS DEAD EMPLOYEES ARE GROSS!

DARBY

Is known to have used Q-tips to clean out her belly button

MIKKI HALPIN

Allows unfilled desires to fester & become open wounds

KERIN MORATAYA

French kisses her rats

EVAN MACK

Sniffs his pits to fuel up during a hard day

DON LEWIS

Has had phone sex with G.G. Allin

ANNABELLE & ETHAN PORT

Dirty dance with Duke Flyswatter and Barb

KRK

Gets turned on by Evan's mouth cheese

IVY SHILD

Doesn't produce ear wax

I.P. FREELY

Enjoys the company of silicone breasts

DAVE GOMEZ

Totes around old pairs of his smelly underwear to show to friends

GINA SCALISE

Doesn't even know how to wash dishes

ALAN ANDERSON

Actually plays in that band Popdefect

JEN ERIC

Drools ugly things in her sleep

PLUS HELP/CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:

SHARRON EBLING, BEN-HURT, MATTHEW KLEIN,
CLIFF THURBER, MARCEL DEJURE, MONICA MORAN, BOB LEE,
AL CACOPHONY, RICH POLYSORBATE, TOMAS, JOHN SCOTT,
DINO, KEVIN CHANEL, MICHAEL B., MY DAD, & MORE.

COVER CONCEPT AND LAYOUT: DARBY

(WITH FOND DEDICATIONS TO GLUE)

COVER PHOTO: DON LEWIS

AD SALES: KERIN AND DARBY

MAGAZINE LAYOUT: DARBY

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WELCOME

TO OUR THIRD ANNIVERSARY SUPER DOUBLE GROSS HOLIDAY ISSUE



Anita Bryant, Vanilla Ice, and NWA. Find out what Florida is going to be famous for next on page 20.



Sound: from the function of our ears to the recording studio. On pages 47-66.



Touring Phoenix can be fun with Don Lewis on pages 39-44.



Performance Artists: read about how gross they are not. Pages 25-31

and more...

What do you do when Rover kicks it under your house and things begin to smell? Find out on page 13.



ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Issues come out "approximately" every six weeks (just don't hold your breath, that's all)

ISSUE #18 (the Glamour issue)

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ISSUE OUT - FEBRUARY 15

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AMINIATURE



AMINIATURE: PLEXIWATT

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DON LEWIS
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ENTERING DARBY

During each issue we engulf ourselves in the theme. This time around it was a little harder to take. Everything gross in our lives now stuck out and whenever we got together the main topic of conversation was always, well, gross. As the contributions flowed in, these small regular doses of gross kept the puke level throat high, always on the verge of letting loose, keeping us at a constant state of nausea.

My first intention with this actually was to leave the reader completely sick and nauseous. They wouldn't be able to get through the thing without getting ill or at least feeling slightly queasy. There the question of shock value comes in because it is assumed that those who purposely use the shock value to captivate, entertain, etc. do it because that's all they really have to offer. Because the presentation is so arresting people get caught up in that and assume that the rest of the message isn't worthwhile. There are a lot of visuals inside this issue. We had to make up for the lost senses. Maybe, as with deformities, they are things that are considered grotesque by our society. Maybe we need to see more of these images to help us conquer our fear of them.

What is really gross? Why do we think things are gross? Much of what we consider gross is natural, like a body function. What is the reaction the body goes through when something makes you sick? How do we get beyond it.

Yes, this really is our third anniversary issue. Actually, our first issue "came out" in October of 1988. Special thanks go to Evan who, when I can get him over here, does much of the magazines paste up. We are phasing him out though and hopefully by the next issue we will have a scanner and do much of the production on the computer (There are too many guys working on this magazine as it is). Also thanks go out to Glue, Sandy Duncan's Eye, Jawbreaker, Lizzy and Al's Bar and everyone who supported the Ben Is Dead Gross Issue Pre-Release party at Al's Bar. From what I can recall it was one of my favorite shows and was very successful as well. And to those concerned that was sardines in tomato sauce on the bar, three for one at the 99¢ store.

If anyone has purchased Ben Is Dead in ANY stores between Santa Barbara to **SAN DIEGO** please go back to the stores from which it was purchased and demand your money back. Ben Is Dead is still and always has been free in Southern California.

And we still run things that other mags won't: Option refused to run Trance Records' "Crust" ad [see inside] because "it's too icky." Coming up in our next issue we are proud to announce that we will be printing a list of all the dead beat advertisers that haven't paid up.

The big question regarding the last issue: How many enemies can you make in one issue? Answer: Many. And it wasn't even the stuff that was purposely mean that got us into trouble. I guess the revenge theme sent a negative vibe all its own that some signs just couldn't hang with. Now our eternal motto is "Fuck them if they can't take a joke", and our recommendation to others is "Don't take things personally." We tried to do the later but have failed... we need examples to follow by.

-Darby

P.S. A special treat to those who actually read all the way through my editorial: Kembra Pfahler (interviewed on page 25) is Adam's (the drummer from Jawbreaker) sister.

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It takes a second to make a mistake and only a few hours for the printer to multiply it by 15,000. -Darby

SHOWS, EVENTS, & GROSS



THE BIG BANG • HULLY GULLY, Oct. 18

This marathon event was almost too much for my senses. In fact, it reminded me of the T.A. (Transactional Analysis) Marathons I went to in the '70s, where I was wrung through the emotional wringer until I became a blubbing mess. The Big Bang went from 10 'til 5 in the morning, delivering "until you can't take it anymore," as the flyer promised.

There were about five rooms, each decorated for a different effect. The one undecorated room had a low stage where bands played. Distorted Pony said it felt like they were rehearsing, and I agree: it did look and sound like a rehearsal. It was impossible to see all the acts going on at the event,

because things were going on in all five rooms simultaneously.

Seemen, a traveling performance troupe from San Francisco, left a series of images resonating in my mind, particularly the "I like to smoke" piece, where one member repeated "I like to smoke" and chain-smoked cigs, while another beat him over the head. I stuck around for Linda LeSabre, whose exotic drums, pounding sensuous rhythms, dirty talk and subliminal whispers of the word "sex" between songs, and her troupe of tribalized-out dancers writhing in ecstasy, didn't do a whole lot for me, probably because I was busy taking pictures. I would like to see this become long and drawn-out like a voodoo ritual, with a slow build to an orgasmic climax, and people going into trances and being possessed.

All through the night there was action around the bar and in the halls, such as a man being spanked by a leather-clad woman until his pimply butt began to bleed, or at least get red and moist. At around 4 AM in the Heaven Room (there was a Hell Room, too), Bliss-O-Rama gave a disturbing and farcical performance with his cohort Richard Belzing as a nun. As he waved his spiral dick, Bliss performed some kind of cathartic ritual dance with plastic and paint, disemboweling himself in the process, then attacking Richard. The near-fight was broken up by Big Bang producer Victoria. Shucks, it would have been nice to see where the fight would have gone.

Things loosened as the evening wore on. People started playing sexual games with each other. Someone I had never met before started sharing intimate knowledge with me... —D. Lewis

TUSK, THE MUFFS • THE GASLIGHT, Oct. 30

Two very different bands, two very different histories at work here. The Muffs, consisting of disgruntled Pandoras and a new bass player, have recently become the hot ticket on the Hollywood scene. They spend a lot of time bewailing the constant Pandoras questions and comparisons, claiming that they don't want the burden of that past association, but they still look to



Fig. 491. Spina bifida in boy of six weeks. Club feet, bladder paralysis. Bellevue Hospital.

history to define themselves, proclaiming that they are in a certain Hollywood garage band tradition. But, significantly, their best song was written by Don Bolles of Celebrity Skin, another band whose sound has been considerably Muffled as of late. Yawn. All the wrong people like these girls, for all the wrong reasons.

Tusk is another band who problematizes the situation of history. "They're the LA Pigface", a cute boy told me, referring to the band's all star lineage of Black Flag, Sin 34, Germs, 45 Grave, Redd Kross, etc. But Tusk refuses to get bogged down in the nostalgia that the Muffs inevitably conjure, because their allegiance lies elsewhere, at the intersection of certain punk rock ideals and the Fleetwood Mac album that they owe their name to. It's a marker which reads "what if?" What if there were no history? What if there were no rock stars? What if a marching band played rock and roll? With four drummers and the musical gall to do covers from Vanilla Ice to the Go Go's, Tusk could be just another punk rock joke band. Instead their complexities of technique and vision shape them into more than a reunion of a group that never was—but that's another historical question. —Ms. Edith Mesplé

PRESSUREHED, HELIOS CREED • SHAMROCK

Pressurehed actually had a really good sound at this show. They play a sorta groovy, Hawkwind, German, early 80's blend of underground psychedelic acid shit. They have guitar, analog synths, a great bass player, and well programmed, tasteful drum machines. They are one of the best alternative bands in LA in recent times although I think they come across better on record.

He is to guitar psycho rock what Joel Peter Witkins is to photography. HELIOS CREED, guitar player from CHROME, has got a band together with three other speed freaks and they are good old fashioned twisted, outa their heads psycho gnarl.



GROSS IS A MEAT MARKET: They offered me a big, triple-decker turkey and ham sandwich, with all the trimmings, and I ate it. It was good. This is a New York-type meat market, where you can custom order meat, fresh. A young woman brought back her porkchop, it wasn't cut right, and they cut her a new one. "Get me some chorizo, and some of that rabbit." "How thick?" Pigs' feet being sawed down the middle. Huge coils of chorizo breaking apart from their weight. (Chorizo is a type of spicy sausage). "You should come in here Saturday and Sunday. It's a real operation then." "What's he taking pictures for?" —D. Lewis



SEEMEN

The bass player was a dead ringer for Sid Vicious's cousin. The girl keyboard player looked really strange and just kept playing odd, random, low farting sounds on her keyboards. Helios played behind a five foot Jacob's Ladder covered in Plexi-glass, reinforcing the Sci-Fi feel of the evening. He is a GOD of Guitar Gods. He has both his vocals and guitars processed through a song he'll tweak the controls and some effect loop throb will jump to the top of the mix. He has such a definite direction and focus to his mania, you are drawn into the sound. He simply plays things that other mortals could only dream of.

-Ethan and Annabelle

TEENAGE FAN CLUB • JABBERJAW, Nov. 2

I didn't know T.F. were popular or on a major label (DGC). To me they were just another out of town (country actually) band I



COULD THIS REALLY BE EX-ADOLESCENT RIKK AGNEW POSING FOR THE 'GROSS' ISSUE?

BEN IS DEAD MAGAZINE DECEMBER/JANUARY 1991-1992



LINDA LESABRE AND DANCERS

wanted to photograph-video-see-hear. I'm not a fan. I have somehow managed to accumulate a few of their discs. One of them I like — played that one twice. Whatever the situation, we paid our four bucks and squeezed our way into LA's only truly "alternative" club. The opening band was My Pain, fronted by Michael Quercio of the Salvation Army/Three O'Clock. My Pain weren't a tenth as dynamic or captivating as the now classic S.A. Fuck, they were even duller than the Three O'Clock. And with all the lame records they released, I think it's safe to say Michael should have quit while he was behind.

By the time T.F. hit the stage, it was so hot and stuffy that Dan Druff had nowhere to run to when he felt this bar rushing up his throat. Rather than bathe everyone within five feet, he swallowed it not once but twice. That Dan, he'll do anything to impress the chicks. T.F. are young and cute in a nerdy "boy next door" kinda way, complete with plastic beads and grown out bowl (mid-Beatles) hair cuts. It's no wonder there were so many teeny boppers bouncing around, although I wasn't particularly impressed with any of their antics. To me, all this fuzzy-pop shit that came after Sonic Youth's "Evol" and "Sister" is nothing but hog-wash. Anyway, God knows it's true and the devil knows it too that T.F. do have their moments of almost brilliance and I was capturing it on video when all of a sudden some big guy with a slimey accent grabbed



photo by Annabelle

Annabelle and I went to Hollywood for part one of our two part "Gross Scavenger Hunt" series. On our way to get stink bombs at the magic shop on Hollywood Blvd. We came across this man. He was squatting there in an alcove and I thought he was just scratching his head or something. On the way out we took a closer look and saw that he actually had been pulling out small bunches of his hair & lying them in front of him. Annabelle went back the next day and sure enough there was a big hair ball [that photo didn't come out] — Darby



HOT ACTION IN THE SHRIMP ROOM: VAGINAL CREME DAVIS SUCKS THE FEET OF ANOTHER SATISFIED CUSTOMER AT SIN-A-MATIC



AL OF CACOPHONY PERFORMS THE 'OCTOPUS' GARDEN' WITH THE HELP OF HIS FRIENDS AT THE BID SHOW



KEYBOARDIST FOR HELIOS CREED LOOKING GROSS FOR THE CAMERA

me and demanded that I hand over the footage. I, of course, returned with a "Fuck You." He called for back-ups. So there I was, dwarfed by this imported pig with no place to run. I had some alcohol in me and was feeling pretty brave but the sobering truth didn't look good. I handed over the fucking video. Then the greedy pig wanted my 35mm film as well. I got really irate and could only muster up an even louder "FUCK YOU," packed up my gear and split.

I hate all the politically correct pussies that cry and complain when an indie band signs to a major. But the whole "no taping" scene is fucking ridiculous. I know for a fact that if I was in a band, I would be for all that bootleg shit. The more fucking chaos the better. Live and learn. Hide the Camcorder better next time! One cool thing... the Jabberjaw people defended me and tried to at least get me some money to compensate for the video. I guess not everybody in the music scene is an asshole. -Krk

HELMET • BOGART'S, LINGERIE, SPANKY'S

For a while there, Helmet were the most exciting new band for me, combining the explosive aggression that "hardcore" was never able to evolve into, the mechanical aspects of "metal" and the loud crushing dissonance of "industrial," blowtorched

together into a nitro inhaling monster that easily claimed the heavyweight title. Admittedly, I wasn't terribly excited about the new "Unsung" 7", but some of my disappointment could have been blamed on the flat production. So, I still arrived at Bogart's (first of the dates on this California only "tour") drooling with anticipation and eager to hear what these four nuts had to offer this time around. Warming up with a couple of older songs, Helmet soon plunged into one new song after another, until the entire set began to blur and I couldn't help but yawn as my dozing brain gasped for oxygen. The one band I had so much hope for had taken a fatally derailing turn for the worse. Okay, maybe it's not all that bad. But in the comfort of my own home watching the video footage of these three shows, it's easy to see Helmet have simply "chosen" a new path, one I don't particularly care for. The newer material seems drawn out, tamer, tranquil and just plain sedated. It's not like the new material isn't good. I guess it is in its own perspective. Hell, tons of people flipped for it. It's just not what initially drew me to Helmet and it's definitely not what I wanted to hear/feel. I think I might have liked the new material more had it been another band with another name. I wanted Helmet and received something to the equivalent of Bonnet instead.

Even visually the band lacked the angry and hostile facial expressions that once dominated their entire sets. At one show



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GROSS SCAVENGER HUNT PART 2, DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES: "OOOH, WHAT ARE YOU TAKING A PICTURE OF THAT FOR? THIS IS A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY - IT'S EVERYONE FOR THEMSELVES... NOTHING TRICKLES DOWN. EVERYONE'S SELFISH. YOU SHOULDN'T COME AROUND HERE AT NIGHT."

in particular (Spanky's, Riverside), the band looked completely uninspired. They didn't even play their wake up encore, which usually consisted of "Strap It On's" and "Hits." It's plainly obvious to see that this is one of those "We've become better musicians, writing better songs" arguments that you can debate 'til you're blue in the fucking face. I don't want to argue it, I like the guys and the band as well. But for me personally, the new "direction" is not what I had hoped for. After an entire week of seeing Helmet at these clubs, I was a little more than disappointed. It was fun while it lasted. —Krk

GROSS STORYTELLING • MAD HATTERS, Nov. 18 (Free)
Mad Hatters is a coffeehouse on Pico near Crescent Heights and though it's in my neighborhood this was the my first excursion inside—it was gross storytelling night so I just had to go. There were stories of vomit (lots on girls vomiting whilst giving head —you'd think guys would get a clue), walking in on old people having sex, some yummy booger tales and a funny one about this guy's cat who swallowed his shoelace. Adam Bregman, of "Shit" Happy, played emcee and interposed the other's stories with short, to-the-point stories of his own.

Maybe it's the nature of performance, but they seemed more like actors than people telling real life stories about themselves or friends. And though that worked against them in one sense, in another sense the best storytellers seemed to be the ones with the tall tales. —Darby

ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT • SPANKY'S SCAFE, Nov. 22, 23

I can usually judge how good a band was on how much camera equipment I break during their set. So after waking up with bloody knuckles and what appeared to be my Minolta, wrapped around my neck I can only imagine R.F.T.C. must have been N.A.S.A. material on Friday. To evaluate the situation further, I decided to head on down to the quaint



MODERN ARCHITECTURE IS SURELY ONE OF THE BEAUTIES OF LOS ANGELES. HERE THE OLD CATHAY DE GRANDE IS TRANSFORMED INTO A MINI MALL.

Spanky's the following evening.

I'm not even sure what bands opened either show but I imagine it didn't matter. Dressed in matching red, the Rockets looked even more suave than I hazily remembered. Now - the Rocket's musical "concept" is nothing to think about. Loud guitar driven rock'n'roll but somehow or other John Reese (lead guitar/vocals) manages to stir up so much passion and enthusiasm, it's hard not to stop and take notice. And if you can listen to just two or three songs, you're hooked! Playing a lot of the timeless hits from their debut "Paint As A Fragrance" LP, I was shocked that the new songs were as good. The entire set was one giant whirlwind of textured rhythms, crashing drums and John's unmistakable vocal howls. I was completely taken. As much as John used to insist "The Rockets are just a fun party band", I think they have evolved into an amazing band that has to be heard. And when is that tail dragging Pushead going to release their 7?"

FOETUS • PARK PLAZA, Nov. 30

Meatplow opened, as they seem to do for many of the touring alternative acts, and though I thought their performance went especially well it wouldn't have taken much to blow Foetus away. Amidst the security guards (always part of the decor), the gate that keeps the audience 10 feet from the stage, and the \$15.00 cover price, Foetus' act fit right in. A rock star ambition tour where neither the band nor the audience was affected by each other. The only reason I'm writing this review is to warn folks to steer clear next time Foetus prances into town. —Darby



"DESIGN" [FACING BACK] PAINTING A MURAL AT GRAFFITI EXHIBITION AT AL'S BAR

THE NIXON DIET

Rumor has it that our pal, Dick Nixon, will soon enter the bestseller list with his own diet. What follows is exactly what Dick ate during the eight days it took him to write his earlier book, THE SIX CRISES. A sneak preview exclusively for BID readers! (Pay special note to the times at which Dick ate—and to the italicized comments relating to preparation of the food!!)

7 AM: canned orange juice, bowl of Grape-Nuts with milk

Noon: ham and cheese sandwich *which he fixed himself*

6 PM: Frozen TV dinner, usually tacos and enchiladas with Mexican Beans *eaten alone*

compiled by Evan & Mikki at the Nixon Library and Birthplace in Yorba Linda, CA



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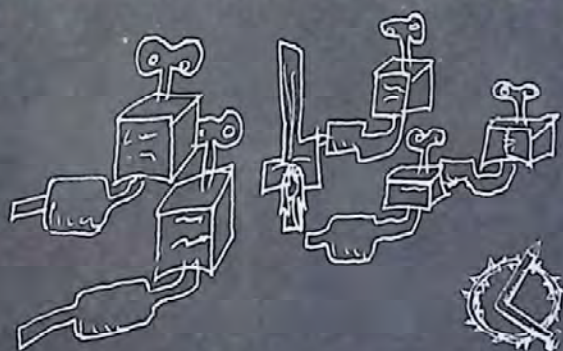


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DWARVES

**SUB
POP**

The inside scoop on DEAD ANIMAL PICK-UP

Mark X. runs a private dead animal disposal service catering to the needs of wealthy Southland homeowners. He recently disclosed some of his lurid secrets in confession with Reverend Al of the LA Caophony Society.

Rev Al: So when and why do people call you?

Mark: They call me because the plumber has just gone under the house and comes out refusing to do any work down there. Basically people are chickenshit. They just want to close the door and let me take care of it.

So how does your working day usually run?

Well, half my calls come in around breakfast, and by the time I'm under there, it's around lunch. Of course, I'm getting mighty hungry. I'm nuking the maggots with Lysol, and all I can think of is Chicken Kum Pao. You know with all the little white eggs, you tend to think of Asian foods, stuff with rice.

Tell me about today's particular runs, you know, the joys and challenges.

The darn possum was in an area where I couldn't really get to it. I would have to cut into the wood. So I used this pole with a spike on the end. It was actually a garden tool that I bummed off a nice family in Beverly Hills. Generally I prefer to pick them up with gloves and garbage bags because if I have to use the pole, it'll just split in two and leave those little tell-tale festerings. So I take my stick and flip the possum over into my bag. They have this way of flopping, all rubbery like a flesh burrito. I knew it was a possum without looking — just by where it was. Dogs die nice and easy. Cats will die a little harder. Possums will find the most inopportune fucking place to die, they just want to spite you in death.

What about the job in Glendale?

There was this dead cat, stuck on the heater, and I was trying to scrape it off. It was really smelling, I guess, because I could hear all these people whining. I had my gas mask on of course and my gloves, and I was just prying it off and it's going "EEEEEEEE," and the people upstairs are furious about the smell that's getting worse and worse. We're talking nasty baked-on stains here.

Did the cat come off in one piece or was it a kind of chip-and-peel operation?

Oh it was definitely chip-and-peel, but it stayed in one piece. It was kind of flat.

Do you feel you've learned much about animals by observing them in death? Like figuring out how and why they've died?

Well this isn't a forensics lab. I mean, people will ask me these things like, "So what did it die of?" And if the person looks halfway cool, I'll say, "A broken heart."

You must wonder though, if you find them in some strange position or setting, what happened.

It does get kind of weird when you have a lot of them. Like one time I found a possum and its babies, eight or ten. But my favorite — and this has happened twice — reminds me of something out of *West Side Story*. You got a dead cat and a dead possum, and they're both about equally fresh together down there in this out of the way place. And you've got to wonder — was this a suicide pact or something because the other cat and possums wouldn't understand. A forbidden love situation. I've seen like dogs and cats, raccoons and cats...

In the love embrace itself or just near each other? Unconsummated.

That's sad.

No beautiful. It's like "We are the World. We are the Raccoons..."

You want to hear something sad? You should have been there last month in Alhambra when I had this multiple pickup. There was like this mamma kitty who didn't really give a hoot about her baby kittens. There were about five or six newborns. They might have been about three or four days old because they were about the size of rats, and they were all huddled together, just beginning to decompose — all different little colors. I thought it was kind of sad, and the mamma kitty was just running around going, "Hi! Pet me! Ha-ha-ha."

The stages of decomposition. Can you describe them? Do you have any favorites?

The ultimate is mummified cat. It's beautiful. Especially when you go to Downey. My personal favorite is like bubbly chicken but you're not sure.

You mean you can't really distinguish the species after a while?

After about nine days. 1-3 days is the vague inkling. Joe Homeowner smells and smell and thinks, "Do I have some potatoes that are rotting or what?" He cleans up his kitchen, finds nothing and begins to get the picture. So at 4-7 days he's getting pretty worried. That's when things are worst. The neighbors are calling up, and there are flies at the screen. 7-14 days brings a little relief. After about the 14th day, it just becomes sort of musty. Three weeks and it's over with. After that, there's no offensive odor and less reason for removing it. Just aesthetic. It's easier to remove it yourself. Particularly in low-income areas, I'm more than happy to give out information about how to do it yourself and save money. It's the price you pay for being in business.

In a sense a lot of your competition from the natural world, from natural scavengers like our friend the maggot and other little scavengers.

Right, but beyond that, there's the domestic scavengers, you know, the pets who are getting just a little tired of Kal Can. I mean I've made a lot of runs where the customer has actually gone down there and found the animal with a flashlight before they call me. And then when I get out there, maybe an hour later, there's nothing at all, and they think it's some big mystery. Well, ninety percent of the time if you just grabbed Fifi and smelled her breath, you'd have the mystery solved. But I don't like to suggest that because people have very fixed ways of thinking about their pets and their eating habits.

Have you ever vomited on the job because the smell was so bad?

I haven't vomited per se, but dry heaves.

Please share with us, Mark.

(Laughing) Well, basically it was your super butterball possum and it was really, really gross and really, really pungent. And I guess my respirator wasn't working that well. It was just too much, and I was ready to vomit and dry heaving away. The woman even heard me under the house, and she was going, "Are you okay? Are you okay?" And I'm going, "Yeah, yeah ... (dry heaving noises) Sure".

How does the smell of death make you feel?

Employed. The smell of death — especially when I'm driving away to drop off a kitty carcass. I've kind of actually grown to appreciate the smell. Seriously. I mean the smell of death is money in my pocket. I do sniff out my work. I have a businessman's nose.

So to speak.

If I'm beginning to gag I know I'm onto something.

A good rule of thumb. Do particular animals have a particular smell?

Oh they're all pretty rancid actually. I just do it. It's OK. Death is my business and business is OK. Well like I said, I sort of am a friend of death. I've gotten to know Death not real well but I kind of like him or her a lot. She or he is — you know — a good employer.

So as things get worse for our animal friends, they get better for Mark.

Yeah, I'm really hoping for things to die. Um, like things get very dry, and I just start hoping for death. As a matter of fact, I sort of have a sixth sense for death. I can almost feel it in the air when I get a phone call.

Are there any climactic or other conditions that seem to affect your business?

Well if it's really cold, really hostile, sometimes cats and possum and other little creatures will die because of the elements. Animals are very wimpy out here in Southern California. I really look forward to when it's like very very hot and the animals die of heat prostration and it's just really, really, really muggy and sickening. You've got this carcass underneath your house in the middle of La Puente, and the second stage smog alert just adds to your problems because if you turn on the air-conditioner, it just kind of blows the smell in even more.

Mark, do you really feel like Peter Pan when you're pulling out a possum that's about to break in two and spill maggots all over the place?

Still I wonder sometimes: Am I really some stupid white trash Peter Pan that's never going to grow up and join the real world, or am I doing a heroic public service for those who'd rather not go under the house?

That's a question I can't answer.

For animal funeral arrangements call Al at 313-8327.



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ANIMAL CRUELTY



BY: RICHARD POLYSORBATE '05



"BURNING CAT WOLF FIRE."

As long as humans have feared the beast within, we have always found some religious or social reasoning for the genocide of Mother Nature and all her undomesticated variety. Though hard to forgive, this frenzied, fear propelled practice of conquering and taming nature as we see fit, (through our Gods of Agriculture/Farming and Cattle Rearing, can be at least understood. However, there's a line to be drawn, as obvious as being lazy and being bedridden in regards to killing out of necessity or inner fear or killing for amusement, sexual kicks, and good ole' fun loving wild abandon. This is a topic books could be filled with so I'll get down to the examples which speak more sharply to the point.

The cat and wolf share a common history of honor/worship one century...kill/torture the next century. The hysteria which fueled the venom was widely Christian based since these predators (considered witch's familiars, etc...) were clever, unpredictable, of this Earth and somewhat abundant at the time of their hour of execution.

Wolf torture: In the day of the pioneers, westward expansion, log cabins and Indian hunts, there was a pathological dedication to killing wolves mostly perpetuated by cattlemen circa 1865 to 1895. Like the buffalo, wolves were simply exterminated. A lot of people didn't just kill wolves; they

would survive this for a couple of days at most. Pioneers poisoned wolves with arsenic, strychnine, and cyanide by the thousands. In the process, all manners of other animals would die. Among them, raccoons, eagles, ravens, red foxes. On occasion this backfired and people would poison bait that overtime would be eaten by starve-crazed settlers. Wolves would be trapped, skinned alive, left to suffer, and eventually picked to death by other animals.

In the 20th Century, people pulled up alongside wolves in snowmobiles and airplanes, then blew them apart with shotguns for sport. In the 1970s, folks in Minnesota choked Eastern timber wolves to death in snares to show their contempt for the animals becoming an endangered species. Another tactic was to cut off their paws, tail and ears, then rope

tortured them. Wolves were set on fire with kerosene to slowly burn to death. Their jaws were torn out then dogs were set on them. Their Achilles tendons would be cut, their eyes would be gouged out. In this state, they'd be penned and people would poke them with red hot irons. Laughing and squealing as they howled in bitter agony, wolves

up their muzzle and shoot them to death with cross bows. Despite the crusade rhetoric, eliminating nature's blemishes and so on, it appears man envied the wolf, scapegoated it as a malicious coward, then chose to eliminate it as he saw fit. This carries the tone of self-hatred spread manifold. With the spirit of the wolf shattered, so went the Indian, locked and bound to the reservation not of his choice. Held captive to dish out unmerciful cruelty to those deemed outsiders.

THE CAT:

All cats, from American Mountain Lions to European housecats, have had the taste of torture upon their tongues. During the age of Egypt, they were highly worshipped: if one killed a



SOMETIMES When You're Young There's Things U do THAT U WOULD FORGET IN TIME.

1. "Let's Put M-FOS in this dead CAT and HATE!!"
R.I. on Mr. Rauls' death step to see what HAPPENS!!

2. I'll Put those old Mashed UP Slugs in my Sister's Orange Juice. I'll bet she'll like that!!
K slugs
← cool w/ refreshing

3. REMEMBER KIMPING THE FAMILY DOG? You just didn't know any better.

4. WHAT About the TIME You played Toy soldiers in the Kitty litter box? These Kitty turds did look like monsters.
Kitty turds
Didn't think they were THAT scary!

5. How 'bout that TIME You popped that big purple zit with the pin? It seemed like it went & bled into your FACE till the pus squirted out. You thought you heard it Pop too!

6. REALLY, DEAR READER. These All probably pale IN COMPARISON with what You've done, No Doubt. WE'll the skeletons always glow in the Dark in some one else's closet. But if we took 'EM All out on the Patch what an interesting little Party We'd All Have.

NOTHING'S REALLY Gross WHEN WE DO IT OURSELVES. It's Just WHEN others DO IT FOR US.

cat, even in mercy, they would be executed in return.

During the Dark Ages, this drastically changed. The belief then being that demons would take the form of cats, among other animals, to aid witch's (usually people that others simply didn't care for) in all manners of wickedness. During the Bubonic Plague, their fate changed once again and they were valued as rat hunters. An animal, feared, becomes accepted when it becomes the predator of another animal even more feared. The tortures cats suffered by the hands of religious hysterics and the simply cruel were numerous. Some atrocities practiced wherever puritanical Christianity flung its root included: public lynching, drowning, burning alive, skinning then rolling the cat in salt, pulling out teeth and tongues then tempting them with food they couldn't eat, throwing them to wild dogs in an arena, dismemberment. One form of torture the villagers would make a sport out of was to tie a rope to two cats tails then place them over a vertical rod suspended 10 feet in the air. The two cats, in much pain, would fight to their death. People, apparently forgetting the condemnation of gambling and cruelty in the Lord's book, would place bets on which cat would win. This didn't matter. They were fighting demons.

Despite the fact that their darkest hours are over, for the time being, cases of individual torture upon cats is still not uncommon. Ask anyone who's worked for the ASPCA, vet clinics, or similar organizations what they've witnessed in their line of work. The stories are endless. One story I've heard was that of a child would trap cats, cut off their eyelids then release them in different neighborhoods. No doubt, every county or town has a similar story. What's gross? Man's hysterically fueled hatred of himself which he, in his learned ignorance, explodes upon the animals, forest and kin. Study history, it's plenty gross. We'll never learn.

*Note: I would like to thank in part the book *Of Wolves and Men* by Barry Hultun Lopez ©1978 from whence I obtained information as well as the graphic.

WHAT ABOUT THE STARVING CHILDREN IN INDIA?

When I was a baby, my mother would feed me while simultaneously talking on the phone. One day, she noticed I was being difficult and spitting out my food. She couldn't understand what was wrong with me. After all, it was my favorite: chicken with rice. Distracted by her phone conversation, she forced every bite down my adorable little throat.

After she had gotten nearly the entire jar into me, I looked at her and smiled a big smile... and a little "piece of rice" crawled out of my mouth and down my chin. She looked in the jar and, yep, you guessed it; it was teeming with MAGGOTS.

The doctor said not to worry since it was only meat and one of the vice presidents of the baby food company came to our home and gave me a lot of toys. —Michael B.©



LUNG COOKIES

A PRESENT FROM THE MESSIAH

Very late one night, I was visited in bed by my favorite furry feline friend, Jesus. He purred and pranced around my head before settling down around my knees to go to sleep. I was near to sleep myself when I heard some strange noises emitting from my little pal. Before I was completely aware of what was going on, I felt some weight plop onto my thigh. "I think Jesus threw up," exclaimed I. She turned on the light, saying, "Don't worry about it it's just a little cat food, I just heard him eating a minute ago." Upon closer inspection this turned out to be only partially true because in addition to a little cat food there was a an entire rat carcass, head and feet included, glistening in my lap. —Evan

STYMIE BALDWIN'S GROSS STORY

My old college was a popular place to dump unwanted pet rabbits. Everyday you'd see hundreds of bunnies begging people for food and running away if anyone got too close.

Well, one time my friend Scott saw a bewildered looking rabbit staring at him. The rabbit didn't seem afraid, so Scott got down on his knees to pet it and say hello.

He was tickling under the bunny's chin and saying, "Cichie-coo", when he noticed that his fingers were getting wet. He looked more closely: Someone had ripped off the rabbit's lower jaw, and Scott had been putting his fingers into a cluster of maggots in the rabbit's neck.



ANIMAL SEX

compiled by Edith Mesplé

Male octopuses have what is called a copulatory arm—one limb which is embedded with sperm packets. The male inserts this "arm" into the female and deposits the sperm, but often the mating is so violent that the female tears off the appendage and swims away with it dangling from her body, giving rise to numerous sightings of "nine armed octopuses".

A boar penis is about a foot and a half in length. The opening isn't at the end but displaced to the left of the shaft. The tip itself is not of erectile tissue like the rest, but of a dense material which is spirally twisted into a corkscrew like shape—a shape which corresponds to the sow's hymen. After "screwing" themselves together, the sow holds the boar tight while he ejaculates several times, emitting up to a pint of semen!

The sex life of fleas is simply to gross to even tell.

Male porcupines are among the few mammals who can urinate with an erection and can emit a stream up to 7 feet.

The penis of the platypus splits into two, entering the cloaca of the female and fertilizing BOTH her Fallopian tubes at once. Later she will lay two eggs.

The penis of a blue whale is over a foot in diameter and ten feet long when erect. In comparison, an elephant penis is only 4-5 feet long, but it is curved into an "S" shape and has an enormous bulb at the end.

Female turnip eel worms live under the skin of turnips and stick their vaginas out when it's time to mate. The male crawls along the outside of the turnip, looking for a vagina to copulate with. They never see each other face to face, as the female then remains in the turnip to give birth, the same vegetable also becoming her tomb.

Hippopotamuses can defecate and urinate at the same time. While they are doing it, they whirl their tails like a propeller, distributing the mixture over the surrounding territory to mark it as theirs.

Male bumble bee eel worms die immediately after copulating. The female finds a host bee and crawls inside. Then her vagina grows to enormous proportions, eventually becoming 20,000 times the size of the worm itself. Finally the worm part dies and the living vagina gives birth to its own.



"The Caterpillar Man," Prince Bandini, used to tell youngsters with his lips.



GROSS SALVADOREAN STORIES

As told to Kerin by her Ito (Grandfather) Chungo

My grandfather was a slut. Besides my grandmother, he knew the sweet nectars of many a woman and, therefore, had many illegitimate children. Anyway, one of his concubines didn't believe in the washing of clothes. When her babies' diapers got "soiled", she would take the soiled undergarments outside, and snap them into the breeze. Whatever came off of them came off and whatever didn't... let's just say the babies didn't always smell very nice.

My grandfather was also a firm believer in the various types of voodoo, or Santeria, practiced in his country. There was this woman he knew (whether intimately or not, he wouldn't reveal to me) who was really ill. She'd been to all the neighborhood doctors, and they couldn't do anything for her. So, my grandfather decided to take matters into his own hands and take her to this voodoo-man he knew. The man looked at her and said she was suffering from a severe kidney problem and that he would cure her. He gave her some medicine and warned my grandfather and the woman that weird things were going to happen and then sent them on their merry way. On the drive home, the woman started screaming and when my grandfather pulled off the road to see what was happening, he totally freaked. Worms were slowly coming out of small holes in her fingers. Then, she screamed again, and tore off her shoes. Worms were coming out of her toes as well. Anyway, my grandfather calmed the woman down, and the worm flood continued for a few more minutes and stopped just as quickly as it had started. And, wouldn't you know it, the woman got much better.

One day, my grandfather and I got into this sort of bull session where we were talking about all the different foods we've eaten. I started getting really absurd and asked him "Well, have you ever eaten an aardvark?" And he replied "Yeah, they kind of taste a little like overdone steak." So, I went through this list, and I found out he'd eaten iguana, armadillo, turtle, big huge Salvadorean beetles, skunk, porcupine, badger and that my aunt used to catch bats, rip their heads off, and drink their blood. Cool, eh?

SICK ON THE BOARDWALK

Interviews by Adam Bregman and Rev. Al



The following anecdotes were collected from visitors to the L.A. Cacophony Society's Free Peanuts and Strange Survey Booth on the Venice Boardwalk where respondents shared favorite gross memories in exchange for handfuls of peanuts. These are some of the worst captured on tape.

I was in Santa Cruz where I went to college, right. And some people I knew who lived on a farm up there were having a party and everyone was getting mighty high. These little kids were out back looking at this goat out in the yard. This goat was tied up, and it would just run to the end of its rope and then snap back and land on its rump. And this kid, this little girl, just two or three years old, was really digging on this, watching this goat do its thing, and the goat was too — something — because all of a sudden the goat just looked straight into this little girl's eyes, got this tremendous hard on, and just came all over its front legs. (Robin Clarke)

I'd been in Europe about four days just around Christmas in the snow and was hiding on this military base near Nürnberg. I broke into the commissary to steal some food, and right next to it I found this old hall where I slept for a few nights. In this hall, going up and down the stairs, were these fuzzy globs of something, I had no idea what. So I just went on eating the food I found and sleeping in there where it was warm and stepping over those fuzzy blobs for a few days. It wasn't until after several nights of sleeping there that I realized that those blobs I'd been sleeping next to were dead rats with mold growing all over them. (Mike Mollet)

I have a rat story too. Another European one. Okay it's about 3 o'clock in the morning walking in downtown London, and here comes this rat, a really big one, really fat. This one girl was really drunk and being totally obnoxious, and there was this rat kinda wobbling down the street right toward us. It gets closer and closer, till she can't stand it. She goes, "Fucking rat!" and kicks it, and when she does, it goes into premature labor right there in midair. All these baby rats raining down all over the sidewalk, some of them kind of alive. (Lisa Mary Moreno)



THE NICE THING ABOUT LEAVING YOUR HOUSE IS YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT WHERE YOU THROW UP

BY CARLA BOZUICH

Once while cleaning up after a show at Jabberjaw, the beautiful and delicate Mackie M. picked up a cup. An onlooker said, "What's that, Cup o' Soup?"

She looked at it. The cup was filled with pinkish milky liquid and a big crusty noodle was hanging over the edge. "We don't serve Cup o' Noodles here", she thought as she gingerly sniffed the mug. "It's barf! It's barf! It's barf!" she cried. But it was in her hands now and her feet were firmly planted in its puddled afterbirth.

You can scrub and scrub, but memories like these you can never wash off.



MOUTH CHEEZE

The grossest thing I ever put in my mouth was actually accidental. My friend had a HUGE, bulbous white-headed boil on his inner thigh. The time was right for some major squeezing. After applying a hot compress to the boil I eagerly awaited the event. I took my spot close to the boil to get the full effect of the explosion. To my surprise, my friend turned his body and squeezed the boil in the direction of my face. The white pus and blood from the boil shot directly into my mouth hitting the back of my throat. I immediately vomited on his leg, spewing forth the three bean soup I had eaten earlier in the day. A couple of days later, my friend sans boil told me that the vomitous soup mix had actually helped his boil heal. —anonymus

Even Tom Leykis loves his Ben Is Dead "Broke" shirt



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shit, I gotta

BY MS. X. KREMENT

A fond memory: When I was seven years old or so a couple of friends and I were playing around my apartment complex when I suddenly realized I had to shit really bad. We were on the other side of the complex from where I lived. I was starting to feel dizzy, slightly ill and all I could think about was the moment I could finally go. I guess my friends were nice because I don't remember them laughing at me when they walked me, very slowly, to my home while I was desperately trying, with muscles and fingers, to keep myself from shitting in my pants.

Holding in your shit can feel good—to a certain extent. The release of the pressure, the toxins, the oozing through your anal sphincter holds many pleasures. During the act, it can make you feel quite inspired. While I shit I often feel energized and ready to take on my tasks.

Remember that story from elementary school days "When the log rolls over we'll all fall off"? It was about this hotel, which as a kid I always imagined was the "Hotel California." This couple goes into the hotel and they are completely tired and need to sleep. The proprietor explains that there's a vacant room but that it's haunted. They are so tired they tell him it doesn't matter and they take it. After a few minutes in bed they hear a noise "If the log rolls over we'll all fall off." And, of course, they get so scared that they jump out the window to their death. This happens to about three more people until one guy who takes the room hears the noise and instead of jumping out the window, he goes into the bathroom to see what it is. In there he finds a bunch of ants on a piece of shit in the toilet and they're singing "If the log rolls over we'll all fall off." That was one of the best jokes in elementary school! It's no wonder we liked shit like Happy Days.

When I was out of high school at least once a week a friend and I would drive all the way to Oxnard to get abused by the "locals" and go surfing. The waves were always too big and/or strong for us but we'd have lots of fun riding the whitewash. One day both of us had to shit really bad. It is common practice to pee inside your wet suit to keep yourself warm, but not being a veteran I wasn't quite sure about the procedure for taking a shit. In the absence of bathrooms we agreed to shit in the water. I had my full suit on, she had a spring suit, and we both were having lots of problems. Once I got the zipper down the suit filled up with the chilly water and I could barely move. The waves slowly pushed me towards the shore as I concentrated... after about five minutes of mental conditioning I let loose and my shit became a part of the toxic culture of our magnificent shoreline. Unfortunately, by the time I was through I was beached,

covered in only one foot of water. Feeling like every eye on the beach was watching me I prayed for a wave as I struggled to get my wet suit back on (we never wore bathing suits under our wet suit—too cool!). Once I made it safely back into the water I did my best at not surfing with my mouth open.

I always wondered if part of the problem with people being scared of homosexuality was because of shit. Maybe they thought the act of being fucked up the butt was bad because it was dirty—dirty as in not clean, not dirty as in a "sin". Now I don't know much about the health care for the penis or the butthole when getting fucked up the ass, as long as you clean up I guess. I do know that if you're a woman and you're getting it in both holes you're best to use the vagina first and never let a guy stick it in you after he's fucked you in the rear. Also the anal sphincter does get stretched out so you've gotta watch it. Shitting is fun but probably not as much fun if you can't control it.

When I was a little bit older still, I was driving home in my car and the pressure to shit hit me like a ton of logs. Practically in tears, I drove into a big grocery store parking lot. I took a few steps out of the car and realized that I'd never make it. I wobbled back to my little car and squatted as best I could under my steering wheel on the floor. People were pulling into parking spots next to me, and a grocery store employee was picking up shopping carts from around my car, but I couldn't have care less. I found a few napkins in my glove box, opened them up and placed them under me. It was one of the big long canoe looking ones and it came out long and slow and kinda felt good. It was truly a masterpiece! One last tear and then I wrapped it up in the napkins and stuck it onto the car seat next to me, took a deep breath and drove off. A couple of blocks away I threw the very smelly mound into the gutter of a busy suburban road.

You can play with your shit without ever touching it. It's fun to use your foods to alter the consistency, color and texture. Carrot juice, for example, turns shit a pleasant color of orange, while iron pills turn it a nice shade of black. Sesame seeds and such stay exactly the same so you can speckle your shit with them. There are lots of things you can do; a couple of good natural laxatives may just be the creative inspiration you need.

POSTMODERN CHILDREN

When I was five years old I would scrape used gum off the sidewalk and pop it in my mouth. The gritty texture as I recal was the chief attraction. —Spaceman.

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"I THINK I LOOK SLIGHTLY WORSE THAN THE ELEPHANT MAN."

BY KERIN MORATAYA

Ever since I was small, I have been grossed out by myself. Some of my earliest memories involve a number of my peers skipping around me, calling me every name for "fat" they could think of, while I stood there, wishing myself dead. I also remember walking into my kindergarten class and seeing a picture of me drawn on the chalkboard with names like "elephant", "fat lady", and "super gross" written around it. Children are the cruelest form of life on this planet. Things like this occurred almost daily while I was little and continued until I entered high school. I was never asked to Homecoming, Winter Formal, or the Prom in the four years I attended my school, so by the time I graduated, I'd decided I was completely unlovable. Now I'm all grown up and I'm still grossed out by myself.

Being overweight is a hell most people can't understand unless they live it for themselves. I can identify with the obese people doing the talk show circuit who claim to have tried every diet on the market without success. Part of the reason they fail, I think, has to do with a huge trap a lot of overweight people (including myself) fall into while dieting - even if the pounds are coming off, you can still look at yourself in the mirror and see a huge blob of flesh. And that, of course, shoots all your weeks of fasting down the drain. It's a matter of self-esteem and self-love, of which an obese person has very little. I've always wondered how many diets have been ruined due to an insensitive remark aimed at the dieter.

One of my favorite diets was a self-prescribed crystal meth diet that I recently stopped. Besides curbing my appetite, the drug gave me really disgusting leg sores that took a year to get rid of and increased my position on the gross scale. So there I was - gross, fat, and a drug fiend. I kept remembering a bumper sticker I once saw that said "So, I'm fat. But you're



Even her mother didn't want her image to taint the family album.

ugly, and I can lose weight." I felt like asking the owner of the sticker "But what if you're fat and ugly? Then what?" Now, having kicked my drug habit, I still think about that sticker and wish someone would answer my question.

Love and other facsimiles are a different problem. When I first started having sex, I used to try to keep my clothes on but that didn't go over very well with the men. Of course, being naked didn't go over very well in my head, but what can a gross gal do? I'd either have to cater to the man of the hour, or be left feeling very lonely and gruesome. I used to get myself into situations with men that would end in my degradation, and I'd tell myself "you fat, ugly bitch, you got what you deserved." It wasn't until I met The Guy I'm Currently Seeing that I realized what I'd been missing all those years. This individual always tells me how beautiful I am and spends hours gently stroking my bruised ego. Of course, I think he's a blind liar. Every time I see a pretty skinny girl, I make myself think of the two of them fucking because I can't shake the idea that I don't deserve a man. And though I couldn't tell you how many one night stands I've had, I've only had two boyfriends. For some reason, men only seem to find me attractive after consuming a lot of alcohol and in the dark.

Of course, this "grossness" is only one state of mind and (thankfully) not a constant one. Though it is a big part of my feelings for myself, I can usually push it to the back of my mind and get on with my life. One day, I'll have enough mental and spiritual energy to be able to deal with these negative feelings and get rid of them for good. And then, who knows, maybe I'll join a vegan Nutrisystem, lose a lot of weight and go on one of those stupid television commercials, probably wearing my Ben Is Dead t-shirt, cleavage cut out. Thanks.

"MORE THAN A WOMAN TO ME.."

by Lisa Crystal Carver

I really had to go to the bathroom. I had stayed the weekend at this guy's house, and since he was a rather new boyfriend, I still wanted to impress him, so I peed in the tub after he was asleep. I could just rinse it down the drain and not wake him with the flushing of the toilet, and so retain my facade of internal purity. But now he was walking me to the bus stop, and I didn't think I could wait until I got on the bus to do what I had refrained from doing for the last three days. I gritted my teeth and continued making pleasant and inane conversation, refusing to admit I would like to stop and use a restaurant restroom. I hoped he didn't notice that I was sweating and shaking. Finally, it was a real emergency. I rushed, without a word, into a building and tore up three flights of stairs, trying to lose him, so he wouldn't know what I was doing. But there was no bathroom! Finally, I found one, but there was someone inside. I pounded on the door, but it was no use: whoever was in there did not realize the seriousness of my situation, and took her time fixing her make-up or whatever she was doing. I started to cry. Finally, the woman exited, and I threw myself in, but I couldn't untie the knot of my raw-hide string belt! I was digging and digging at the knot, and I knew I couldn't hold it in any longer, so I said, "Maybe I'll let it out just a little bit." And then there was this big warm soup in my pants, and it was running down my legs. Still the knot would not come undone. There was some ant-killer spray in the medicine cabinet, so I put that on the knot. It worked. I peeled my jeans and underwear off. They were ruined. I threw them away. Luckily I was wearing two shirts, so I made one into a skirt. I washed my legs and shoes, but I still didn't smell much like flowers, so I sprayed myself with window-cleaning fluid (there was no soap). A quick look in the mirror and I dashed outside to find my amour. "Hi", I shouted, "I saw a girl I knew, but when I ran after her, the seam of my pants split, so I threw them away." I prayed he didn't catch a whiff of the cleaning fluid and get suspicious...

STRING SHY

ANJI SUBSTITUTION

In brainstorming for a "gross story", I realized that most gross events in my life were rather brief. The punch line seems to come immediately.

I mean, how much can you really say about finding a fly in your burrito, discovering squirming maggots in the cat food, or accidentally shitting your pants when you thought you merely had gas? I couldn't really think of any extended time gross incidents.

After speaking to several of the BID staff, I sensed that most of the above mentioned areas would already be thoroughly covered. Finally, I recalled a story I doubt anyone else will tell. It happened in a Life Drawing class at Otis Parsons a few years ago. I had just completed a sketch and was looking for a new position. The only available space was at the back of the room. This was a full on view of a female model's uplifted ass. I began sketching, having a bit of a problem with the perspective, since her legs were coming out straight towards me. I guess that's why I didn't notice right at first. When I got down to the genital section, right there in plain sight was a tampon string hanging out of her pussy!



MIKE DIANA

"Yeah, I've never screwed any babies before or anything like that."

Many years ago, I associated Florida with oranges, Anita Bryant, and my weird nasally sounding relatives. As time went on, I learned about Disney World, cocaine trafficking, Miami Vice, and the remake of Scar Face. Now humidity, Cuban immigrants, and Mike Diana come to mind. Michael C. Diana's art, at first glance, is a sickening juvenile display of hate, carnage, sacrilege, and sexual perversity. An onslaught of bloody bodies, gaping pus filled holes, and a consistent trashing of religious and cartoon icons. Mike's work starts to grow on you and there's not a doctor available to help you scrape it off. Mike was interviewed over the phone as he was working at this father's community store "The Cabbage Patch". —by Marcel DeJure



How would you describe your work?

I just try and kinda shock people and offend them.

For any particular reason?

No, just to, I guess make them think about stuff.

What sort of audience do you have?

It's mostly just people through the mail. I think half of 'em are probably kind of normal people and the other half are probably real weirdos because I've gotten letters before from people asking me to come out where they live and stuff, you know, so they can lie me up or I can lie them up or something. I really get these weird letters once in a while, but I'm not into any of that really.

So, it's just, for entertainment value?

Yeah, I've never really screwed any babies before or anything like that.

Do you ever get any threats? Like from Christian groups or anything?

Just from the Florida law enforcement, it's like the FBI. Back in last December, I had these two FBI agents come to my mom's house and I happened to be there, and they said they had a copy of my Boiled Angel No. 6—I had only sent out 10 copies—and they said because of that I was a suspect in the Gainesville student murders and they wanted me to take a blood test and get my blood type and they told me not to print anything else or they were going to press charges.

Did they say what charges?

They said obscenity and they said they could arrest me right there for it and they asked me a lot of questions about it but I didn't answer any of them. That kind of had me worried for a while but I haven't heard anything from them since, so I think it was just like the Gainesville hysteria or something.

What kind of responses are you looking for? What sort of response would make you feel like all the work was worth it?

I don't know, maybe if somebody went on like a mass killing spree

and it turned out that they had a copy of it in their pocket or something... I like it just when people write me say that they like it, or maybe it influenced them in some way to do their own art or writing or something.

What are some of your early influences?

A lot of the old underground comics, like S. Clay Wilson and Greg Irons, a lot of those guys, and also the EC comics I used to like when I was 15 and 14 or something.

Is there any sort of fascination with the, like out here there's a book store that's, they're real fascinated with killers and that sort of, do you read up on that kind of stuff?

I've been writing to Gerald Schaffer. He's a serial killer in Florida prison for life. In the mid 70s he killed quite a few women; raped them and killed them. Through there he met Otis Toole, in that prison, so he got these autographed drawings from Otis.

What did Otis Toole do?

He was with Henry Lee Lucas, traveling around, killing different people, and I guess he's like a real big cannibal guy.

What's the grossest thing you can remember as a kid?

Probably when I first moved to Florida, I was like 11, and when I first saw cockroaches, it really bugged me. That's still the only insect I think that really bugs me and I wouldn't let crawl around me, is a roach. My dad would always throw them at me and stuff... probably cause he saw I didn't like them. That's about the only thing, I've seen a lot of autopsy footage films that never really bugged me that much.

Has there been something that's been sent to you that's too gross or sickening for you to print?

No, not really. There was one time where I didn't want to print real pictures of real dead people or whatever, but, I used to before and then I quit for a couple of months, so I didn't want to print any of them. I don't mind it now. So I think just about anything, as long as it isn't something like child porn or something that would get me in trouble.

Who's the grossest person you know?

I don't know, I'd probably, not that I know personally, but probably somebody like, you know, I thought that one guy, Daumer, was pretty gross.

Do you have any ultimate goals as far as publishing or with your art?

I was hoping someday to have gallery shows, be able to sell bigger pieces of my art and shit. Right now everything I make is mainly just a print because I don't have a market for making anything on a big scale right now. I don't have the room or anything else.

What about horror films?

Yeah, I'd like to get into that, too, but, here, just a second. That's \$1.26. Yeah, I'd like to get into doing films and stuff and that's something I've been wanting to do for a long time but... to do that, you need more cooperation from a lot of people, and I can never find the people to rely on enough to do it most of the time so I just end up drawing; it only takes me to do that.

What was the response to your video Big Baby Jesus?

Most people seemed to like it. Though it was, after I watched it, it was slow in certain parts and there's things that I would change.

Did you send it to Film Threat?

Yeah, I haven't heard anything from them yet. I just sent it to them,



I think it was when the last issue came out, so I don't know how long it takes them to back to people.

Didn't you do something with that guy in Chicago, Mark Hodgner?

Yeah, we're working on this thing now, where he has some video stuff that he's done and we're taking submissions, different films, that other bands and people have done.

Did you see G.G. the other day?

Yeah, he was all totally nude and bleeding. He sang six songs then two cops came in with flashlights into the show, into this little club. They surrounded the building, there were 12 cop cars and they came and kicked everybody out and took the band in the back room. I don't know if they got arrested or what so we just left. We figured it was over. But I was surprised that the cops came like that. There was a couple of people there videotaping the whole thing so I'm going to wait and see if they found out what happened to him, if he got arrested or what. I think they just wanted to break the thing up. It was pretty wild. When he was there he'd shit on the floor and pissed and threw it at people and they had a couple posters hanging on the wall with glass over 'em and he smashed those on the floor and rolled around them.

What's the grossest thing you've ever done to somebody?

I don't really do that much that's gross. Probably my sister when I was like 8 years old, we were fighting over the bathroom one day and I was in there taking a crap and she came in when I was right in there so I reached in the toilet and pulled the turd out and I smashed it on her head and so my mom had to wash her hair out in the bathtub.

What about to yourself?

I have this video I made where I'm jerking off with a rosary wrapped around my dick, but I don't know if that's really gross or not. It depends who's watching.

Are you familiar with that guy who did the big umbrella exhibit?

No, I don't think so. I heard something about it.

Well, he's got \$26 million to put a large amount of large umbrellas up on some hill out here and in Japan. The

continued on page 79

GROSS?

MOVIES



Here at the alternative cultural center of San Pedro, nestled, half concealed, in the middle of a dying mini-mall, is the center and focus of porn, slash and splatter, Mondo Video, distributor of bad taste and perversion to thousands of sick borderline cases like yourselves.

If you're the kind of citizen that would gas Macauley Culkin for felony cuteness, who would give Benji a strychnine and LSD puppy biscuit, if you like to photograph road-kill, or put dead cats in people's mail boxes, you will like these movies.

For those blessed with divine anti-taste, here is a banquet of bad, a feast of feces. From the sensitive feminism of *Frankenhooker* to the sober political debate of *Repo Man*... on to the really good stuff.

Ready to leap into your hand, there are such extremes of cinema as *Todes King (Death King)*, a sinister film from the same nation that gave us Adolph Hitler. This deliciously dark piece of German anti-culture is about a killer chain letter that induces murder and suicide in its readers. *Todes King* includes brains on a plaster wall framed as art, and the linking theme is the only known time-lapse sequence of a real decomposing human corpse, complete with loving full color close-ups of heaving masses of high speed maggots. I don't know how this one ever made it past customs. Show it to your grandma, then bury her.

Or how about *Frea*, a Japanese animated film that reveals the inner savage under the business suits of our friends the Japanese. It features lovingly animated, Bambi-eyed helpless fems with tits like basketballs, being raped and slaughtered by invading aliens equipped with flexible, cobra-like johnsons with teeth. Bullet-proof Kevlar condoms are recommended for these guys.

The Japanese are probably the only people more depraved than we Americans. This kind of ultra-violent sexploitation animation is hugely popular over there. Typically more graphic than any filmed image could be, another good example of this genre is *Megaforce 23*, which features sinister tentacled biomechanoid machines tearing people to dripping shreds, snaking in and out of their shattered skulls through their eye sockets. Gah.

Also useful are historical films with subtle political overtones - such as *The Gestapo's Last Orgy*. This film is one of the best of the Nazi exploitation films, combining blatant anti-Semitism with cannibalism. If these sick bastards had won the war, you might be able to purchase today, in a convenient microwave package, filet of unborn Jew.

An even more uncompromising and heartless bit of anti-taste is the notorious *Salò, 120 Days of Sodom*, or the Marquis De Sade meets World War II Fascist Italy. Banned for many years for its sympathetic portrayal of brutality, torture, and gourmet shit-eating, this film is deservedly rare and borderline illegal. It must be seen to be believed. Winner of the

release of the last five years.

On the lighter side, there's the famous Goddess Bunny in the *Goddess Bunny* video, tapdancing his/her heart out in a heroic portrayal of triumph of will over crippling polio. Utterly unique, and very surreal. Twisted, literally.

Another fine film is *Sante Sangre (Blood Saint)*. Wonderfully dreamlike and surreal, it is the story of the madness and redemption of Fenix, who went mad as he witnessed his circus knife performer father sever the arms of his mother in a lover's spat. Filled with circus folk and drunken perverted clowns, it features the spectacle of an elephant's funeral, in which the body of the creature, in a gigantic coffin, is tossed to the starving poor at the Mexico City dump, who



Mapplethorpe award for creative corn-holing, it is also useful as an aid to dieting.

If you're into killer transvestites, you're covered. *Sonny Boy*, an oddly touching film, features David Carradine in drag as Pearl, the foster "mother" of a mute killer orphan wild child, and Brad Dourif, in one of his greatest roles, as Weasel. It's a tale of a very dysfunctional family. Highly recommended - far better as drama, and more trusted as entertainment, than any theater

quickly devour it like rats on a sack of french fries.

For a truly hilarious and nightmarish film from the gentle folks who brought you *Cafe Flesh*, there's *Dr. Caligari*. The luscious Madeline Reynal is in the title role, playing an insane nympholeptic psychiatrist who does mood and gender transplants between a mass murderer and a suburban housewife, aided by a brain probing syringe the size of a turkey baster. My personal

favorite, the pink satin straightjackets and crazy sets give a mood and look to this picture unlike anything else. Goes well with vodka and Prozac.

Moving slightly towards the mainstream we have *Re-Animator*, the only film in which a person is throttled by an attacking length of intestine, and *Hellraiser* which, with its leather and piano wire fashion statements, is what the world would look like is Satan was a fashion designer.

For the vinyl glove and Vaseline crowd, there's *Hardware*, a great sci-fi flick in the same sort of neighborhood as *Road Warrior*. The main twisto-pervert turns out to be the good guy. Featuring a horny warrior-robot, this film received an "X" rating for excessive violence, especially the scene where the guy gets cut in half by an automatic door.

There are hundreds more obscure and irresponsible videos, by far too many to mention. I have covered just a few of the high points.

Bob Timme (proprietor)
Mondo Video, 639 Channel Street, San Pedro, CA 90731

OTHER POSSIBLY GROSS MOVIES/VIDEOS

Dr. Butcher, M.D., The Wizard of Gore, Salo, The 120 Days of Sodom, The Incredible Torture Show, Faces of Death I-IV, Bad Taste, Toxic Avenger, Brain Damage, Street Trash, Wormeaters, Luther the Geek, Mother's Day, Nekrophilia, Shocking Asia. Plus anything by John Waters or Herschell Gordon Lewis.

GROSS FILM BOOKS

Re/Search #10 - Incredibly Strange Films, Psychotronic, Film Threat Magazine, the Amok Catalogue (gross books & videos)
-Compiled by Gina

OOZES AND STENCHES IN THE LIFE OF A PARAMEDIC

BY CLIFF THURBER

In search of some gross images from a vocational vantage point, I talked with two Paramedics, Keenin and Mike from L.A. County Fire Dept. #68. They both informed me that in their particular field the word "gross" has lost any and all semantic value. They have become numb to the kinds of things that would instantly induce vomiting amongst us average Joes. So here are some of the gross scopes that led to their sensory numbing.

Responding to a call from a concerned neighbor, the paramedics entered a man's apartment on Longwood Ave. Upon entering, a pungent stench akin to rotting fish and feces bit their noses. Armed with gas masks they further examined the subject, an obese man in his late 30's lying on his side in the living room. He'd been dead for about seven days and was physically decomposing. There were larvae nests in all orifices in the head. He was oozing a creamy pus-like substance from his eye sockets. The man had been dead for a substantial enough time for the trail of ants the length of his spinal cord to build their nest in the man's anus.

A 25 year old male on Hauser Ave., learning to ride a friend's type motorcycle while under the influence hit a fourteen year old girl. At a speed of no less than 75 miles an hour, he instantly sheared the girl's legs from her torso. They lay on the pavement, intermittently quivering from severed nerve endings. Her brain was strewn



Fig. 500

Fig. 501

Figs. 500 and 501.—Pictures of a young man before and after rehabilitation, whose case is of unusual importance in exemplifying the necessity for orderly selection of operative steps and the possibilities of restorative treatment according to the plastic surgical principles that the author advocates.

like a scoop of ice cream dropped off its cone from a car at 55 m.p.h. A trail of spinal fluid the color of egg yolks trickled from her exposed spinal column. The overview was an abstract painting done in a fourteen year old girl's blood, spinal fluid, urine and aqueous humor. When I pressed for a simpler, more composite description, they agreed on cauliflower and tabasco sauce.

This next incident involves two drunks in a car on the 710 freeway. The men in the car hit the center divider, careened, and hit another car. The drunk men's Pinto burst into flames. When the paramedics arrived they found both men resembling elongated burnt marshmallows, skin bubbling and hissing. Their clothing had all burned off, except the soles of their shoes. The paramedics compared this to an "evil dead" movie. The twist in this one, is that one of the men went on to live for three hours afterward.

The last one involved a woman in the McArthur Park area (I actually saw this one on the news). This lady was mauled by two Pit Bulls. Each Pit was endeavoring to chew off one of the woman's arms. Upon arriving they saw the clipped end of her sinewy tendons peeking out of the arm sockets. The sharp jagged cut of the flesh around the arm sockets was the only remaining skin anywhere on both arms except for a few patches on her right elbow. The woman died of blood loss. Apparently she didn't call 911 herself.

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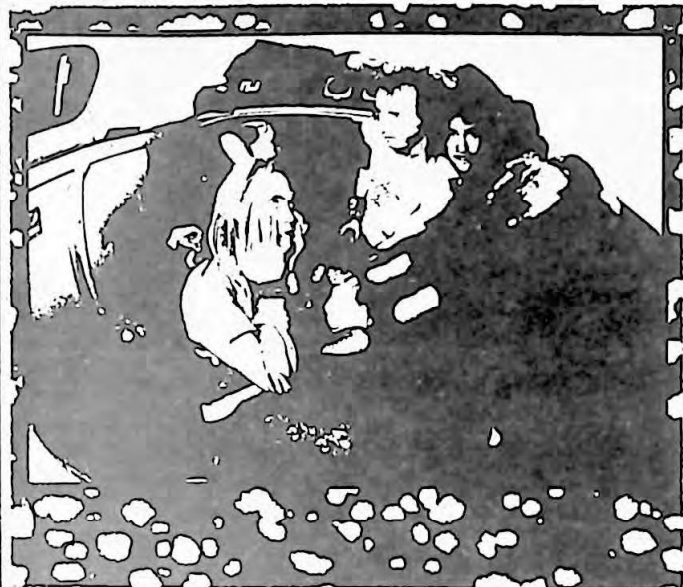
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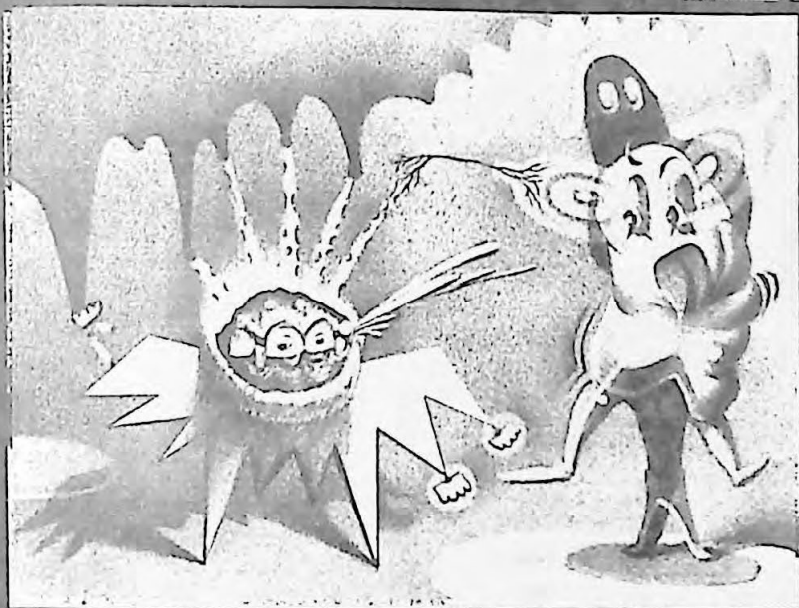
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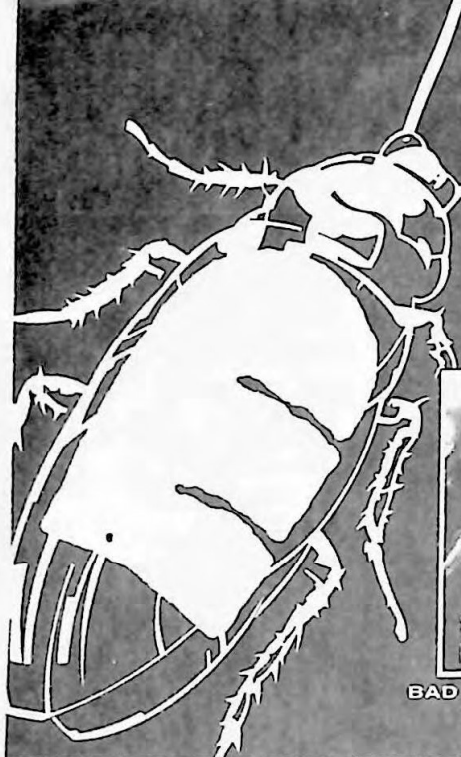
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GROSS?

PERFORMANCE ARTISTS

If someone were to ask you who was a "gross" performance artist some of these eleven names might come to mind. Obviously there is a history behind these artists and the work they present isn't always for the sheer shock value. But let's face it, being "gross", from nailing your penis to a wood plank to eating shit on stage, is a great way to capture an audience's attention. There is always the question of what is next? If you see someone eating shit once it's not going to be as interesting the next time around. How far can they go? Where are they going? What are they trying to say?

Like always the "theme" seems to get diluted until you get to the juncture where, even though what these artists do may be gross, it seems an arbitrary focal point for an interview. Even in the realm of gross where we found ourselves immersed, the emphasis appears to be primarily limited to the physical aspect. Despite that and all the editing we needed to do to cut this down to size, the interviews came out well. Two weeks before the magazine was to go to press I gave Don Lewis the dreadful assignment of searching out, calling and interviewing these artists. They were all conducted over the phone by him. I would also like to thank Jeffrey Chandler who accomplished the even more dreadful task of transcribing all of them within a week. -Darby



BOB FLANAGAN

What is the grossest thing you've done on stage?

The last performance we did, the "Sick" show, had videos as part of it. The thing people saw in the video that grossed them out was, of course, putting a nail through the head of my dick. And then taking the nail out and having it bleed into the screen so the whole screen is covered with this kind of dripping blood image. People tend to get grossed out by that.

Are you live on stage with the video monitors?

They're arranged and suspended to look like my body: the head, genitals, chest, feet and hands. So the head part is just my head. The finale is the dick part getting nailed to a board. This nail gets driven through the head of the dick.

Are you in person there?

I'm in person doing other things, but when the videos are showing I'm not there. In person I've nailed my scrotum to a board, which has grossed

people out. Sewn myself up and those types of things, things that pierce the skin. Guys tend to get grossed out by those things more than women. In almost every performance somebody's fainted and it's always been a guy. Usually a pretty big guy. So I guess fainting is a form of being grossed out.

Getting back to the nail through the head of the dick—how does that feel?

It's scary to do. I do it myself. I nail it and when we tried to shoot it for the video we had four different tries. I did it once years ago just because it was a sexual thrill. I wanted to try it and had this compulsion to do it. And then I've done the scrotum several different times which is really easy for me, 'cause it's just thin tissue, but the head of the dick is a lot more serious. I knew I wanted it for the finale of the video montage that we worked on, but every time I tried it I chickened out. I drank tequila and tried to get myself loosened up, but it just didn't work. Finally, the day of the performance, when all the other videos were edited and I still didn't have an ending, finally I got up the nerve and we did it. The worst part is doing it. The nailing of it really doesn't hurt that much. It sort of throbs. The penis throbs afterwards but the worst part is just the actual psychological part of it. And that's also the biggest thrill, just overcoming that.

What is after gross, when there's no more shock value? Do you use shock value in your work?

No, not intentionally. I'm kind of fortunate in that some of the things that interest me are shocking, because it kind of keeps people's interest. But I don't do things to shock the audience. It's usually just: "let's do this because it's what we do already." All the performances we've done have just been public displays of things we've done in private; not things done just to titillate an audience.

What is the effect you're trying to get?

continued next page



photo: Michael Levine

KEMBRA PFAHLER

[KAREN BLACK]

What is your concept of gross?

Gross to me is voluptuous horror. It's kind of beautiful and ugly at the same time. That's the full name of our band, The Voluptuous Horror Of Karen Black.

Voluptuous meaning the body, and sexual, and the horror, kind of like dealing with the horror of the sexual body?

Yeah, that sounds good. That's it.

Gross to me is when your spine tingles, the hair on your arms stand out. I don't get grossed out by blood and guts or anything too much. I like the more phantasmagorical, science fiction type of gross, where you're really not sure where it came from, where you have to scratch your head and go, "Hmm, well."

What is the grossest thing you've done on stage?

I guess that part where I stand on my head and this bunny rabbit comes and cracks eggs on my butt. I first did it ten years ago without any musical accompaniment and it was

continued next page

KEMBRA PHAHLER CONTINUED

pretty stark. That was basically a nude performance piece. **That's kind of symbolic in a way: It's like the egg coming back into you instead of coming out of you.**

Yeah. It looked pretty good. It looked pretty hairy. It looked pretty gross. Now our work is more embellished. It's more colorful. It's more costumed and stuff.

Can you describe one performance?

In Karen Black, we do a whole set of thirteen songs and each song is like a little movie, where we act out the movie with the music, with our rock and roll band. We feel the band is like the bread and the performance art part is the butter on the bread. It's just easier to digest that way. It's a more fun experience than just standing there watching me totally nude, standing on my head, cracking eggs on my butt. That was a less joyous experience.

Performance art to me, it's kind of hard. I never understand when I go to see performance art. Or else it's too boring to watch. In Greek there's this term "mimesis," which is the person that stands up there and acts like a dick in front of everyone. It's a natural thing for me. It's really good doing this with Karen Black, doing more theatrical things with the rock band. I just like it so much.

I wrote a song about Mike Kuchar. He's a really great film maker who used to make Super 8 movies in the late 50s. I used to show my Super 8 movies at screenings and appear in costume to do little shows before the movie started. Mike described us as looking very voluptuously horrific, so I wrote a song about voluptuous horror and about the way our costumes look. I have black teeth when I'm in this character. There's one costume where I have strings tied to my labia that're attached to my wrists so that I can sort of open and close my labia, like I'm quacking like a duck. Some of it was pretty good. That looked pretty sick, in a way, but it also looked funny. I looked sort of like a moth. At the end of the number this bunny rabbit hops on stage and cracks an egg on my butt while I stand on my head. It's very ceremonial.

I was just talking to my mother about this today. She was saying, "I really am sorry I never took you to church", because we didn't really grow up with any organized ceremony or religion or any kind of dress-up event. Then I said, "Well, I really feel like I'm doing it now." She agreed with me.

BOB FLANAGAN CONTINUED

I'm trying to move people to feel something. The stuff I've been doing lately is meant to show people that through pain and suffering and being sick (which is a lot of what my work is about), after all that, there's sort of an ascension. It gives an uplifting feeling to things that people think are awful or down or bad. If you go deep enough into it, there's an uplifting of the spirit, of creativity. That's why at the end of the shows I usually wind up suspended off the ground in some way.

To portray that ascension? It seems like a path one can take.

Yeah. And it's a really old path. The American Indians, the Hindus, and a lot of different cultures have used not turning your back on pain and not turning your back on what's gross, either, to kind of focus your attention on those things.



photo: Chris Ferretti

CURTIS YORK

What is the grossest thing you've done on stage or that people in the audience would consider gross?

You should understand, I don't want people to think that I do things to be sensational. I think it's good to work with taboos because overcoming taboos is part of gaining wisdom and it's a way to access something primal. Probably the grossest thing was this piece I did with a lot of flags around where I was talking about hanging out with my parents in their Winnebago across the street from Disneyland on New Year's Eve. My mother and I started talking about something political when my father commanded us to stop because everyone had to do what he said, that it's a patriotic mobile home and everyone has to be patriotic when they're in it. [laughs] Which is funny, but he really meant it.

I didn't really know how to react to that and my mother just immediately got up and started cooking and making food. So while I was telling that story I put some apples,

"If you're going to have a body and you like having a body, you have to find a way to accept all the oozing fluids that are involved with it."

some applesauce and some of that food coloring and a lot of sugar into a blender, blended it up and put it into a pastry bag, which is the bag that cooks use to put icing on cakes. Then I squatted and squirted it into my asshole and did a little dance, twirling a baton. After doing this thing with a flag, marching around, I squatted and shit the apple stuff into a pie tin with a pie crust in it, and ate part of it.

If you just look at physically what I did, it's not the full picture, cause it was a metaphor for the way my family deals with things they want to avoid. Plus, I think it's obviously a primal thing to avoid shit and not ingest it because you

can get really sick, so it's a taboo at a primal level of reaction I think there's a lot of liberation in not just overcoming, but becoming more familiar with those deep reactions we have to things.

Death and blood and menstrual blood and snot, everything that has to do with having a human body, is somehow seen as being really dirty. I think if you're going to have a body and you like having a body, you have to find a way to accept all the oozing fluids that are involved with it.

It sounds like you're purging attitudes and things you got from your upbringing.

Yeah, definitely. I don't think that it's just for me, though. I have been, and I think a lot of people are, especially a lot of gay men, really terrified of menstrual fluids and anything vaginal. A lot of women in the audience were really disturbed because that's theirs, they want to keep it a secret, they want to keep it hidden. It's not right for a man to be doing that. And I was doing it out of respect, I wasn't doing it because I think women are gross or anything.

I think men have a problem. The truth is, women do, too. I think women are ashamed of it. I don't think women should run down the street with their menstrual blood on their hands clapping and singing when they get their period, but I do think it's way too hidden, that whole thing of being unclean.

So at the very end of the piece, I transform from my mother and from everybody's mother to more of an archetypal mother, goddess thing. I talked about how a lot of cultures before our modern culture really revered women and worshipped a goddess instead of a god. Then I cut an onion in half and hold it under my eyes to make myself cry. I was still placing a guilt trip on the audience. Then I took the other half of the onion and started rubbing it in what was supposed to be my pussy. It really disturbed people.

What I think is really gross, is this insurgence of really mediocre surface-crap performance art that's happening right now, where people just stand and talk. A lot of the kind of work being generated by Highways is really gross. [It's] intellectual, verbally-based, nonphysical, non-visual work that stays on a totally conversational level. I also think it's gross that some artists are being promoted because of their race. I think it's gross, and I know it's happening.

Performance art is more rooted in the tradition. It came from visual art. It was an attempt to bring visual ideas into space, incorporate space and time into visual work. It also has to do with the body and discovering what happens through certain disciplines, what comes through, what becomes apparent visually or physically.

The artist using his or her own body as the medium instead of paint or wood or something?

Exactly. And personally I feel the message or meaning is discovered through the process of unveiling. Work that starts from the message and from the meaning rarely obtains the kind of depth that — do you know what I'm saying?

It's been all worked out.

Exactly.

What is after gross?

When you get right down to it, it always comes down to blood or death. [laughs]

And after that?

I guess you find out when you get there. Hopefully you won't die. [laughs] I don't know, I think it would probably be peace. I mean, if you could really get to the point where you come beyond, when you somehow find a way to embrace everything that is repulsive to you, that's what would happen. After that point, you'd be at peace.



photo: Marc Trunz

ANNIE SPRINKLE

What are the things you've done that people consider gross?

Well, see, to me, there's nothing about sex that's gross at all but I guess I've done a lot of things that people consider gross. For example, having sex with about 3,000 men. In my show I've made computer graphics of my porn career and I break it down into the fact that I've had sex with 3,000 men. The average penis size when erect is six inches, according to Masters & Johnson, so if you add it all up that makes 1,500 feet of peni, which is the exact same height as the Empire State Building. Then if you add up the amount of cum I've swallowed, figuring that I've swallowed one out of at least three ejaculations (this is before AIDS, of course), this adds up to 5.1 quarts of cum swallowed, and I know a lot of people think that's gross, but I don't think it's gross. I guess I've done a lot of things sexually that people find really gross, like a lot of golden shower stuff.

This is in the performance?

No, I pee in a toilet on stage because I'm going to show my cervix. Then I take a douche and sometimes I have to pee after, you know, because it makes you have to pee. So then I pee sometimes. But it's done very lightheartedly. It's not meant to be shocking. It's done very matter of factly to show how it's not shocking; I do it to defuse the issue, not to shock, because whenever people say I pee on stage, it sounds really gross.

So then I show my cervix to whoever wants to come up and I guess a lot of people consider that kind of a gross thing to do, but it's a lot of fun; it's very playful. People love it. And of course when I have my period the line is usually twice as long. People really like to see where the blood comes from. I think some people consider showing amounts of blood kind of gross but to me it's very beautiful.

Does it smell?

No, 'cause I take a douche first. The three things that I never did try, were, I never fucked a horse, never ate shit and never did it with a dead person.

In your performances, have there been problems with the club or performance space itself or with the audience or with the outside world, those spheres outside of your own self?

I did get arrested once for having sex with an amputee. I like amputee sex a lot. I was arrested for sodomy for having sex with a woman without a foot. Some people would consider amputee sex gross. I don't. So there was a problem with that. We took photos of it and I was going to publish some photos in my diaries. I was publishing my diaries.

Did you publish your diaries?

Yeah. It was in a magazine called "Annie Sprinkle's Hot Shit."

Is that a one-shot magazine?

Yes. I've done about twelve one-shot magazines. I have a book out and there's a photo in that book *Annie Sprinkle: Post Porn Modernist*. There's a lot of things that people consider gross in that.

In the sex with the amputee, how was it done?

Well, she didn't have a foot, she had like a seventeen-inch stump, so, it's like a big, giant cock. And also I had sex with a guy without a hand, so that was really hot.

More pleasurable than an actual penis?

Well, it's different. Also, I've been with a lot of midgets and dwarves.

Are they smaller in penis size than-

No, actually, not. When I was in prostitution I saw some of the world's smallest penises that were, like, smaller than the pinkie finger. Really tiny, tiny little things. That's pretty amazing.

Of course, a lot of the men I was with might be considered gross by others but, no, I try to see the beauty in a person. I was with Wilt Chamberlain. If you want, you can be the first to print that.

You were with Wilt Chamberlain?

Yeah, he's big. It's so funny that now he's coming out with that book saying he had sex with 10,000 women. I said, "Oh, god, I'm not surprised, 'cause I was one of them."

What is after gross when the shock value wears off?

To me, gross is beautiful. What other people consider gross to me is totally magnificent. I mean, I just see grotesqueness as a great compliment. I just like extremes, basically.

How does this relate to your performance work?

My performance is basically the story of my life, so in my performance I show slides of the amputee sex and the midgets. I show slides of all this. Some are in the act and some aren't. It's a sampling from all the different things I've done. One of my lovers was totally scarred from head to toe because he was in a fire, and he looked like an alien from outer space. He was beautiful.

My life is really the performance, and the show that I do is a documentation of my performance, in a sense. So, in other words, a good sexual experience with, say, a person who is totally

scarred, to me that's a great performance. That's the performance art. Then to show pictures of it or a video of it is the documentation.

Char [a friend of Annie's] mentioned that your work has a healing nature. Can you comment on that?

One thing, it's very educational. I think it is transformative, healing.

In what way? My idea is that it heals by dispelling our puritan restrictions.

Yeah, that's a good point. A lot of people might say I break taboos but I don't think I really break something, I sort of recreate a new, more liberated — I mean, there's a lot of levels. That's another whole story, about the healing aspects of my work. I think that basically I use sex as a healing tool. For example, for headaches or pain or asthma attacks, things like that. My motto is "Let there be pleasure on earth and let it begin with me." To have pleasure and experience ecstasy and orgasm and joy is very important towards healing the planet. So there's that aspect. I mean, I could go on, there's other aspects. Personally, in terms of the relationship between men and women, I feel that what I do helps liberate women's sexuality and is very feminist.



JOHANNA WENT

What is the grossest thing you've done on stage?

The grossest thing I ever did was bite into a live eel. I don't know what happened but it burned my mouth completely. I don't know how it got into my mouth but somehow I did it and I got this terrible gum infection which was very gross. I don't suggest that anybody do that.

On stage you've done things with fluids and substances, goo and things like that.

I was very big on beef lips for a very long time. Pigs' heads, cow heads, goats' heads, entrails. All kinds of entrails. Meat costumes. I used to pile this meat onto a wire frame desk and tie all these different pieces of meat all over it. And sometimes I would tie lots of liver on a piece of panty hose and pull it over my face like a bandit. I would have all these pieces of liver tied onto it so I looked like kind of a meathead.

Do you use shock value in your work to get a message across?

I don't personally try to shock people. In fact, I'm usually amazed at what people are shocked by or how easily some people are shocked. I'm always surprised by that because I have never set out just to shock people. My work is transgressional. I definitely like to violate certain moral codes but I don't consider what I do to be offensive.

What can you say about the meaning of your performance?

I consider myself to be a ritualist and I like to perform these little ceremonies. I put together images from my dreams, my daily life, my environment, and whatever I'm influenced by: television, movies, whatever I happen to be influenced by during the period of time I'm working on the show. I try to make as much of a dream environment as possible, where images are thrown about in an unexplained manner. You can interpret a dream in a multitude of ways, and that's the way I do my performances: open to interpretation by the audience. I'm not a performer that likes to preach to people.

Where do you see your work going in the future?

I don't have a next performance. I need a place to do a show that's big enough to accommodate my performance. It's really a problem for me because what I like to do is perform in clubs. I really miss that and a lot of the art spaces in a way don't really accommodate me because they're either too small or in some way I feel like I just don't fit in. I've always felt kind of like a bastard. People are expected to be in a more intellectual mode whereas in a club people are definitely in that emotional one, you know, they're ready to accept things on an emotional level and not try to pick them apart intellectually.

photo: Don Lewis

JOE COLEMAN

What are the grossest things you've done on stage or that people would consider gross? "Gross" is kind of a vague term—

Yeah, it is kind of a vague term but also it doesn't do justice to what is going on. In my performances the very act of being a geek, you know the definition of a geek? It's not a nerd in a high school, the actual geek is from the old turn of the century side shows and is defined as a person that is less than human, that is subhuman, who would bite the heads off live animals, and he would do it for the entertainment of the local townspeople, who would be able to look at this man that had become an animal, who was now less than a man.

And they would feel better supposedly?

Yeah, so that they could feel better about themselves. The reason that I would do it is different. My reasons are more for the need to transcend it. I was grown up a Catholic and it

"People think that I must have no feelings. I have an incredible amount of feelings."

inspired me. I don't know if you ever read the story of "Nightmare Alley", but "Nightmare Alley" describes a side show barker who was repulsed by the geek. He thought it was the worst thing a man could be and he went on to con people out of their money. He became really famous in the spiritual racket, by fooling people into thinking he could contact their loved ones and exploiting these people's most intense. Eventually he was exposed as a fraud and started his journey downward, until he became an alcoholic hobo. When he ended up penniless and looking for work, he asked the owner of the side show if he had any jobs available and the guy said, "Yeah, I do have a job, but I don't think you'd want it," and he said, "I'll take anything." The owner asked him if he knew what a geek was and the guy said, "Yeah, I know what a geek is," and he says, "Do you think you can handle it?" and he

said, "Mister, I was made for it." The idea is that he needed to find spiritual redemption by becoming the geek, by becoming the most horrible thing he feared, and that's where the journey comes from.

Your own personal journey?

Yeah, to find spiritual redemption in me and redemption for my own sins.

What sins could those have been?

Well, they're mine, you know. That's not important. It's the journey that's important. It's something everyone needs to make. Maybe you could experience it through me. That's where catharsis might come in. If you just recreated a Haitian voodoo ceremony, say, or any tribal ceremony, it would seem only quaint and folksy to a modern audience. In order to exorcise modern demons you have to deal with the things we all face in a modern civilization.

So it wasn't for shock value or anything like that?

No. Shock value is not one of my concerns. The repulsiveness of the act may be one of my concerns because it's just as repulsive to me as to you. People think that I must have no feelings. I have an incredible amount of feelings. It's painful for me to do it and if it was not painful for me to do it then there would be no reason to do it in the first place; then it would be meaningless.

So it's therapeutic in a way?

Yeah, and personal, dealing with my own personal damage. The internal rage is what that stuff really is. To look at it superficially takes away its value. That's why it can't be phony. It can't be theatrical blood. It can't be a rat that's made out of plastic with hair glued on it. It's gotta be real to have meaning for me. That's not to say that somebody else could not get something out of it but the only reason I'm doing it is for me.

Why did you do it in public? Was there a value of people watching you do it for yourself?

Yeah. It's that need to communicate the pain, which is important, to get it out of my system and to somehow communicate to another person the internal pain. At its worst, the horrible act of murder is an attempt to communicate your pain to another person. But it's an act which destroys you. To kill is to be killed. But the act itself is an act of communication. If there was no need to communicate then it would be suicide; it would be killing yourself. If I didn't want to communicate then I wouldn't do it in a public space.



photo: Krk

LISA SUCKDOG

What do you consider gross?

Oh, shoot, not much. I really like a lot of things and it's funny, because I've pretty much grown up in New England and people are pretty puritanical here. But I think most things are really fun. I just got a letter from somebody saying that I was trying to be gross or shocking or something by talking about straining phlegm through one's teeth but I think that it's really horrible to go through life without enjoying straining phlegm through your teeth. It's something you can do very sensually and for free, too.

What things have you done on stage that people would consider gross?

The thing that most people think is most gross is peeing and what they thought was defecation, but wasn't. I really encourage everybody to pee at least once in a public place because it is really fun and if you can just get past that initial frightening pee it's a really incredibly enjoyable experience and one which you will probably repeat often if you just do it once.

What's after gross, when there's no more shock value?

I really don't find much gross, so I guess it's after gross for me already. I mean, I think it's gross to, say, kill an animal for fun, that's really totally disgusting. That's horrible, but I wouldn't say that it's gross. I mean, the gory part doesn't bother me in the least.

Oh, you know what? Have any of these people talked about eating shit? Because there's these people in Japan that eat shit and I'm very curious to know about it. I hope you find somebody that does it 'cause it's kind of taboo and everything. But actually I did that when I was about seven or eight, and I didn't know it was bad, so I must have been a little younger, but it had a really neat texture. It had just

DEEN SWAYDAN

What are the grossest things you've done on stage?

I find that what I'm doing and what others see are two different things. People, especially women, are ready to stop with the immediate of what they see. [In "The Conflict Within"] I'm ripping out guts, pulling out a baby and I'm choppin' into it, pulling out the brains and eating it, pulling off the arms and eating them, then another one pops out of my stomach. It's a tumor, and I squeeze it all this goo squirts out like tumor pus. I guess that is really disgusting. All of the ingredients that I use are just household ingredients. You know, food products. Nothing is an animal product, yet people tell me that they've smelt flesh during this, and that they've gotten nauseous. When I have talked to people afterwards, they've told me that to them it was a physical abortion and they're correct, it is an abortion, but it's not physical. It has to do with mental abortion, mental illness, trying to get rid of the voices within the head. I have two women dressed as baby dolls on either side of the stage, moaning and laughing hysterically, very insane, and those are the voices within this person's head. The person's very androgynous. You don't know if this person is pregnant, if it's male or female because it's wearing a bone white, demented looking half facial mask. When I talk to people afterward, women are very quick to judge it as though I'm anti-abortion until they ask me what it is and I tell them, then they're, [matter of factly] "Oh, I see that but I didn't catch that because you pulled the baby out." And I respond that the only way for me to call out the mental voice is to show visuals of what I'm doing. Then I've talked to different men. Some of them just like it because it's gory. I've had a couple catch on that there was more going on than just an abortion. They were able to see beyond it.

When you do these performances are you exorcising childhood memories?

I'm going off of, "personal experiences," as well as seeing people on the streets and stopping to listen to what's going on. What I'm trying to point out is that these voices were personalities growing within and aborting them by pulling out the guts and blood is trying to get to the soul of the matter. This is just one glimpse in one period of this person's existence where they're able to exorcise these voices. But how many times have they done that? You know, how often do these voices have to be aborted? Is it every time that they feel happy, feel sad, feel anything other than just a straight mind level or have they ever done it before, or is it the first time? Are they a master at ripping these out? I've seen people on the street and they seem perfectly sane. The next time I'll see this person absolutely on another plane: yelling, screaming, the demons are all around them. They're very real to this person. And then I come and see them, you know, they're okay again. My question is, what's going on at the height of insanity in their life at that point?

the right push and pull, you know? But I don't remember what it tastes like because I was too young. But that might just be a taboo. I mean, I know it's not good because it's waste, but it might not be a bad taste. It just might be our idea that it's a bad taste.

Have you had any problems at clubs with your performances?

Yeah. I mean, we've been shut down probably a third of the time from various regions. I can't really remember why. One of the best times we got shut down was before we even played. The city council in Boston decided that our show for Scottie's Tavern was indecent, even though they'd never seen it and they didn't even know what it was about. Just from the name and rumors they'd heard, the city council shut it down and it got in the Boston Herald, so when we played a show at another place in Boston, I don't know, like 500 people came that would never normally go to a show like this, just cause they saw it in those papers. So that was the best one.

The woman with the wrench. Oh, she was great! The woman in, I think Kentucky, the club owner, she had a wrench and she was chasing me. [laughs] She was great! She was sexy. She wanted to shut it down but she couldn't because she was only one-half and the other half wouldn't let her shut it down, but she chased us out. That was fun.



Did it add to the performance?

Oh, yes, yes! Totally. I used to complain because we were always shut down and I said I just wanted to be able to play shows through. But after we got a little bit of fame or whatever and places didn't shut us down because they knew what to expect, then I was really kind of disappointed and I miss the old days. Especially when we played with Psychodrama, it was really fun because we'd always get in serious trouble and be chased out by people that wanted to beat us up and we even had a car chase one time. That was really exciting. Oh, and we did get beat up, at least I got beat up, twice. That was fun, too.

Were you seriously injured?

Yeah, I still have scars on my head from Robin, who was immortalized shortly- Well, I don't know if it was immortalized because about three people heard the tape, but was immortalized shortly thereafter in the love song, "Robin." Yeah, she ripped my hair out. So I have two places where the hair didn't grow back. But I guess that's not gross. Actually, the only gross part of the performance, for me at least, is after it's over, when we're all sticky and dirty and cold and bruised and we have to sleep on some floor and I'm still too drunk to be able to figure anything out, but not drunk enough to enjoy the feeling. But all that does have its own certain pleasure, too.

KAREN FINLEY SELLS OUT!

I remember when Karen Finley had integrity. You should have been there—I saw her in her glory days, in New York, way back in '87 when she was cool. Those shows are legendary. They were exhilarating! Challenging! Daring! Disgusting! When she brought out all the different cans of sickening food from the market, the crowd went wild. Back then just about all the foods that she inserted into her orifices or smeared over her naked body were mushy, runny and stomach-turning. Yams. Summer Squash. Beets. Real radical, sickening stuff. Oh sure, there was the occasional foray into the mainstream, like the "Melted Ice Cream Sandwiches" routine. But, in our youthful innocence, how were we to know that this gesture was betraying a pop sensibility, and was a harbinger of things to come? By and large the main thrust of her shows then consisted of bold, uncompromising grossness.

In '88, Karen went through a transitional period. Gone were the yams, and in their place were beaten eggs, glitter and plastic grass from easter baskets. Some fans had reservations about the glitter. They wondered aloud, "Is this ART, or merely show-biz?" But those feelings came from only the most critical and extreme of us. After all, it was still a repulsive spectacle. I mean, pouring cold eggs all over yourself? YECCCCCH!

Around this time, things started to get crazy. Members of the audience had to be restrained from clamoring onstage while she was performing and snatching discarded clothing or little pieces of food as mementos. Crowds went wild at the show's end, chanting her name until they were hoarse, long after Karen had left the auditorium. We embraced her vision of the world, and loved her completely. Ah, what a time it was! It was a way out, groovy, wacky scene. Best of all, it was *ours*; *we* were the future—and we thought it would last forever!

But soon after things started to go sour. First a feature in *Newsweek*. She became the darling of the New York high society art world. Then Broadway. Then the film offers multiplied: she made her first movie, and then another. She sang on a Sinéad O'Connor record. Soon the older fans were deserting her in droves. How dare she hob nob with such vermin, they reasoned; she belongs in the underground! How can she desert us when we scammed in to her shows all those years! She's nothing but a phony, nouveau riche art poseur!

But the final indignation was yet to come. We all got a preview of the new Karen Finley at the recent shows at UCLA's Wadsworth Theatre. The performances exposed her true cunning; the real extent of her ambition. Imagine the crushing disappointment that descended upon all of us, the die hard faithful, when we saw...

Chocolate.

Melted chocolate.

A melted bittersweet chocolate heart from the finest confectioner in town. And candy valentine hearts. The ultimate sell-out. I mean, how could you make your act any more palatable than by smearing imported belgian chocolate all over your nude body, and then sprinkling red hots over the sticky sweet goo? Everybody in the world loves chocolate. What a cynical, calculated career move. After the chocolate and hearts, to broaden her audience she wooed the Baby-Boomers by attaching bean sprouts to herself. And *then*, just to make sure that she got a good review, at one point in the performance she threw hard candy out into the audience—a flagrant bribe. It was a disgraceful exercise in crass commercialism.

Gone is the vegetable matter tangled in her pubic hair. Ditto with the eggs baking on her skin under the hot lights. Now we have performance art that a mother could love.

Fans all over the world are asking: Karen Finley, WHAT HAPPENED? Why did you SELL OUT??



photo by Ken Jennings

FRANK MOORE

What are the grossest things you've done on stage or that people consider gross?

Linda Mac (for Frank Moore): The Meat Act? Okay, Frank says the Meat Act. Frank is in a wheelchair and he doesn't talk like this, he talks [muffled sounds from Frank] like that. For the Meat Act he's singing a song by Black Sabbath called "Hand of Doom." Right before that song when he was singing another song, two of the cast people, a male and a female, were doing an erotic dance nude on stage in a strobe light where they cover each other in glitter, chocolate and whipped cream. For this act they're standing there covered in those things and the female is whipping the male with a black leather whip. Then the lights are flashing and the strobe lights go on and I come out as a henchwoman with hardly any clothes on. I have these two monsters with me that are on all fours, also nude, and they have blood dripping from them. We go into the audience and we stalk our victims. The song's a seven-minute song so we cruise the audience for several minutes, looking at different people, considering them as possible victims. Then we finally reach our victim and I point the person out and the monsters abduct the person, screaming and kicking, "Help! Help! Help!" and bringing them up to the stage.

And this is not a "planted" person, it's an actual, unsuspecting person?

The victim is planted. In fact, Jack Marquette was our victim the last time we were in L.A. The victim is packed with chitlins and ketchup and minestrone soup and chicken skins and whatever else we

come up with, but you don't see that. They're wearing loosefitting clothes. When the monsters put the victim up on the stage in the strobe light they rip the victim apart; they rip the victim's clothing off and then eat their innards. That goes on for several minutes, then the victim dies. The smell is really gross, a very gross smell.

What smell is that?

Well, the smell of all this food that has been sitting against that body for hours while that person's been standing in the audience waiting. Like chitlins and chicken skins and all that. So the victim dies but toward the end of the song I reach down and take the victim's hand and the victim is resurrected. Then all of us stand side-by-side and the lights come up and we end the show by singing a Sonny & Cher song called "Somebody." That's it. Frank, are you saying something? [translates] "I H-A-, I have, E-A-, eaten, L-I-, live worms." That's part of a show that we did in the 70s, "The Outrageous Stevie Review" Frank ate live worms.

How did that taste?

He said it didn't taste bad at all; it was pretty tasteless. "IN, In fact, I-T, it, W-A, was, M-, much better than another part of the show featured our hostess, our emcee, a really very tackily dressed, kind of Fredericks of Hollywood style, with a several-feet high wig with flashing Christmas lights in it. One of the things that she did was make up a little concoction with her blender. She would call it a "Meal In A Parfait Dish." She'd put the dessert at the bottom of the dish, which was candy corn, and she'd build up from there with canned beets and instant mashed potatoes and blended hot dogs. Frank said that was a lot grosser than the live worms.

What does one do after there's no more shock value, no grossness?

"I have not reached that point yet." He said he'll tell you when he does.

G.G. ALLIN

Caught me right at a good time. I was takin' a shit. **What are the grossest things you've done on stage, or that people consider gross?**

That's something you'd really have to ask the people. I mean, I don't consider anything I do to be gross. If it repulses people, I really don't care. It's not really a question for me to answer cause, fuck, nothing bothers me. I don't know, some people might think fucking a dead cat is sick or taking a shit and eating it, but to me that's okay. **What is left, when there's no more shock value?**

Well, what is after that? I don't know, I mean, there's no limit, I suppose, after that would be death. I mean, you'd go as far as you can go and break every law that you possibly can and take every limit and every chance that you possibly can. The only thing left is you're gonna die and if you accelerate that fast and you die then that's such a great climax. So that's the thing that I look forward to the most. It's like the final climax. Everytime I do a tour I know I'm going to go to jail, I know I'm going to go to hospital and one of these times I'm gonna quit playing Russian Roulette. See, when I go on a tour, it's like Russian Roulette. I know that one of these tours, I'm not coming back, and that kind of excites me.

The best thing I could tell you is come to a show and then witness it, experience it, cause it's like nothin' you'll ever see. And you gotta see it. When we played on this tour, we had people out on the streets running up both sides of the street and I was out on the sidewalk throwing chairs at cars, so it's gotten to the point where it's beyond the stage now. We're actually taking on the outside world. So it's definitely expanding and getting much more violent.



photo by Tracy Allin

PETER YARMOUTH ON G.G. ALLIN

Basically, I met GG back in probably 1981. He was in a band called GG Allin And The Jabbers. At that time they had some pretty hot musicians, in particular, Rob Basso and Alan Chappelle. Then, with GG getting rowdy between the audience and GG spitting all over each other, people throwing eggs, milk, you name it, at the band, the quality of musicians dropped off. All's hung in there for the longest time. Rob quit after he got hit with about 15 quarters in the face in New Haven, Connecticut. And then from there GG and The Jabbers disintegrated. GG was basically playing anywhere in the country for \$100 and he was determined to go to California for his first time, but he got stabbed on stage in Texas during that show. He tried to rape a girl in the crowd and she stabbed him and he didn't get any medical care until he was so sick he couldn't move. He ended up getting blood poisoning and that was the first of many times GG was to get blood poisoning from cutting himself, rubbing fecal matter into the wounds, getting spit on, having piss thrown at him, you name it. **What do you think got into him, to make him turn from being married to a CPA and everything to this?**

Well, you know, a lot of people blame me. When The Jabbers used to play, it was a nonevent. They'd just come out and play and I encouraged 'em to make it more exciting, try to bait the audience a little bit. I certainly didn't expect it to go where it has. I mean, when people go to see him right now, they don't want to see music: they want to see GG cut himself open, they want to see him do something gross. At a recent show in New Jersey he said he would eat any girl's shit who shit on stage. A girl came up, she shit; he ate it; and then he blew his brother on stage. GG's message is not to gross people out; GG's message is to wake people up. GG stands for free speech and he's going to every extreme to basically say, "There is no limit to art. There is no limit to music. Rock and roll is not supposed to be safe. Rock and roll is supposed to be dangerous." He's not gonna stop doing what he's doing until he kills himself on October 31, 1992. He's doing it to take it further than anyone's ever gone. It's not a stage act. It's not a gimmick. This is not an act for GG Allin. GG Allin is real. GG Allin is scary. GG Allin is on the edge.

What is after the shock value? It sounds like there is nothing after that, for GG.

GG's tryin' to make a political statement. GG's trying to create change in this country, okay? He doesn't want things the way they are. He has to do these things to get your attention. The freak show's not the message. The message is that if you're just gonna sit in your life and let things happen, nothing's gonna change. GG stands for change. He wants change in how the system is, both the music system and the government system. I mean, the main reason he

went to trial in Michigan is the FBI brought him in 'cause he wrote a letter to Hinckley, the man who shot Reagan.

Saying what?

Well, according to *Spin* magazine, he said, "Too bad you missed. When you get out, I'll help you do the job." One of the new songs on his new album is called, "Kill The President." GG believes in change by revolution and by violence, not through peace and negotiation. Because peace and talking peace has never accomplished anything in this world. The only way change has ever taken place in this world is through blood being shed and it's the only way things are gonna change and it's sad, but that's the way it is. I think society has made him what he is. I can't even imagine all the things he's been through. He had all his teeth taken out with a crowbar after a performance in Chicago. He has no teeth. He's got little pieces of teeth. Once I saw a man beat GG with two palm trees that were planted inside a club. The guy uproot one palm tree and beat him and as he beat him pieces of the tree were breaking off, welts and blood were squirting out of him, and then the man took the other tree, uprooted that, and beat him with that until there was not enough of a stick to make even a billy club size, and the guy gave up, with GG just lyin' there, bleedin' all to hell. Just because GG does what he wants to do. He is hated all over.

He's like a magnet almost. I just have feeling though, that after he commits suicide on stage, it'll be forgotten as just another rock and roll thing.

Well, upon the suicide being completed on stage, the book will come out about his life. That book includes the fact that GG was born with the name Jesus Christ Allin. It's right on his birth certificate. I've seen it. And the way the story goes: His mother tried to kill him when he was a boy. His parents lost custody due to that fact of trying to kill 'im and custody was awarded to his grandparents, who changed his name legally to Kevin Michael Allin. But the nickname GG stuck, because kids couldn't say Jesus. That's where the name GG comes from.

GG's not the biggest man. He's not the tallest or the most muscular man you'll ever meet. I'd say he's kinda the opposite. But I tell ya what: in prison, people stayed the hell away from GG Allin. Cause GG Allin is real and he's not afraid to die. He is a man possessed. And that's why I have all the respect in the world for him. Oh, he's got multiple personalities. GG is a multiple personality. A paranoid schizophrenic.

Does he have a soft side?

It doesn't last very long, but he has a soft side.

Does he have a girlfriend or anything like that?

GG prefers prostitutes over girlfriends. He says relationships suck. He certainly likes all the groupie status he gets and it's amazing with all the talk about AIDS. Even AIDS hasn't gotten GG Allin. And if anybody is in all the risk groups, it's GG. He falls into every high risk group. Faggot, freak and junkie. He's all of 'em. And I think even AIDS is afraid of GG Allin.

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FEARLESS LEADER:

A GUIDED TOUR UP THE ROLLERCOASTER OF LIFE WITH SARGE AND ALIEN ROCK

Fearless Leader are a gross band from L.A. So gross in fact, they attracted a sleazy film producer before they could get an indie record deal. The film, *Graveyard Rot*, and accompanying soundtrack LP, #5, are soon to be released via Brad Smith Entertainment (the film) and Hell Yeah/Dionysus Records (the, uh, record). I am not the most impartial or objective interviewer as I appear in their stupid movie and live with one of the members, but when I told Darby this she said, "Well, then you're the perfect person to do it!" Our perfect interview follows. Interview by Dickie Dark.

DICKIE: So everyone wants to know, Sarge, what is the special pleasure you take in being gross? What do you get out of it?

SARGE: I don't do it for what I can get out of it, Dickie, I do it for what others get out of it.

Well what do you think we get out of it?

S: I dunno. I've never been to a Fearless Leader show yet where there wasn't at least ten or twelve people—if there was even ten or twelve people there—cracking up, I mean the whole time, you know. Some people get it and some people don't, just like anything else. A lot of people are really disgusted by what we do and a lot of people are really turned on by it.

What do you think, Alien, is the big pleasure you take in being gross?

ALIEN ROCK: I don't take any pleasure in it.

S: Sure you do!

So why do you do it?

A: Cause somebody has to.

What was the most satisfying gross thing you've ever done? When did you really feel like you had done it?

S: Well, this is funny, but the most satisfying gross thing I ever did wasn't in Fearless Leader, it was in *Crawlspace*. I hadn't been in the band long, Alien was still in the band, and we played at Madame Wong's. And I went and bought a pig head from this Mexican grocer, and thawed it out, and wore an apron and rubber gloves on stage that night. And I smacked it around with a hammer and stuck it in the eyes with a screwdriver, me and Alien kicked it around for awhile. Eddie didn't look real thrilled with it! And the best part is, when we left, I went into Madame Wong's scuzzy ass kitchen, and went behind all these chairs that were stacked up back there, back by the heater, and threw the pig's head back there.

Did you ever go back and sniff for it?

S: No, I've never set foot in that place since that night. We called and tried to find out about it but they just hung up on me when I asked.

BYSTANDER: Boy, you missed the Fearless Leader show of all time last weekend, Dickie.

What was the grossest thing that happened?

B: Well, his underwear was loaded with food, they were puffing and bulging out, dripping down his leg, and he would squish it like this, and it would go ssqurrrbling all out.

S: I started out that night with a Depends diaper on, but I got it so soggy and wet it fell off, so I decided to pour it down the G-string I was wearing. I brought a whole purseful of food, refried beans, pork and beans, Dinty Moore Beef Stew, cream corn, some peas for Mark McCormick of course, Spaghettio's...I had four cans of Spam down there, and forgot to even open one. There was so much food down there I couldn't tell what was my dick and what was food.

You have a hard time keeping your pants on, don't you?

S: Uh, yeah. Some might call me an exhibitionist. Like my wife!

Have you become less violent now that you've got-



PHOTO BY DEBBIE DIPP

(L TO R) SPAMMY HAGGARD, ALIEN ROCK, ORAL B. GOOD, AND SARGE IN THE "DREAM ON" POSE

ton so into being gross?

S: Being old makes you less violent, Dickie! Yeah, you work out your inhibitions when you do that crazy shit, you know. The only reason that I am still in Fearless Leader is that I get to do that shit. If it was just a normal, everyday band, we'd never still be together because we can't fucking stand each other! I've quit Fearless Leader about 967 times to date.

A: And I say, "Okay. We're playing again."

S: And I can't say no.

Is this quitting the band on stage a staged thing or...

S: FUCK NO! If we go up there and sound like shit and I want to leave, I'm leavin'! Every gig that we do ends up sounding like shit, you know, and it really pisses me off. But, usually when we sound like shit we're funny and we have a good stage show. And when we play good, we don't have any good shit to watch and people are bored. Oral B. Good and Spammy Haggard got pissed off 'cause we sounded good one night and moved back to Texas.

Spam wallowing has become a big fixation for this band, was it a case of...you just did it once and it felt good, or...

S: Well, here's the thing. You open the can of Spam, and what have you got? You've got meat, and this little goopy substance. The goopy substance is the only tasty part, what do you do with the meat? You've got so many holes on your body...I put it in my mouth one night and ate it (Note: all in one mouthful), so the next night I shoved it down my pants 'cause

I couldn't think of anything else to do with it. And once it was down there it felt pretty good, so I squished it around and made a little Play-Doh dick out of it. And people liked that, and we don't like to do things twice, you know, our motto is "Everything that's been done before and more," but only once! So the next night there wasn't much for me to do but shove the Spam up my ass. People really liked that one, the recipe for Granny's Dingleberry Spam Cakes!

So do you try to do what the people want or what you want?

S: People don't fuckin' know what they want, Dickie. I do the Spam thing and everybody goes, "How fucking gross!", and one night I don't do it and those same people go, "Where was the Spam?" So you know...they like it and they know it. They like it better when I don't get any on them, but they still like it. **You guys were trying to get Hormel to sponsor you at one time, right?**

S: Yeah, no one ever contacted them. I don't see why they wouldn't.

You wouldn't feel bad, taking their money to promote Spam?

S: Shit no, I'd love to take some of their money. We found out that Hawaii has the highest per capita Spam consumption in the world, and we wanted Hormel to take us to Hawaii, do a nice little tour and promote their product while we're doing it. But we're too lazy to follow through.

So is there anybody out there you feel like gross



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brothers in arms with?

S: I wouldn't want to get anywhere near him but I like G.G. Allin's attitude! Otherwise, no. The only bands even in our category are these JOKE bands, and we're not a joke, 'cause we really do this stuff live. There's Haunted Garage which is kind of Baaaah, and Celebrity Skin which is totally sucky music... I haven't seen the Imperial Butt Wizards yet...

I wanna hear more gross shit. What's the most expensive gross thing you ever did?

S: Hmm...expensive...one of the first things we ever did, as far as uncomfortable, here's one. We played this show at Club Nigg in San Luis Obispo, in '87 sometime. And we wrapped our entire bodies in duct tape, which was a really poor idea, it cut off our circulation within minutes. And around our stomachs we filled these plastic bags with pigs' guts and chicken parts and barbecue sauce and pork and beans and stuff, the idea was to cut it open and eat our own insides onstage. Well, Allen didn't wrap his as tight as mine, and mine burst, I had this stuff dripping down this tape inside of me, it was fuckin' disgusting. And it took us about two hours to cut ourselves out of that fucking tape afterwards, and ripped every hair off my body. Never again! Should have Vaselined myself.

So what was the most fun part about making that movie Sarge?

S: You rolling around on the ground with your pants around your ankles drunk, Dickie. By fucking far. I dunno, filming that movie was a trip...we'd start real early in the morning, and the guy who was making it, Brad, would get us five cases of beer. By the end of the day, we were pretty fucked up! We all got poison ivy out there in the woods...

What was the best thing about acting with the actresses?

S: It wasn't in the movie, it was at dinner. The first night we filmed we went out to this swank restaurant and they gave us our own room 'cause there was so many of us. Brad had hired these two porno models to be in the movie with us, and they were real stuck-up, cunny bitches, so I proceeded to make a big mess. They brought my food and it tasted like shit so I started throwing it at this guy across the table, he got so mad he threatened my life and walked out of the picture right then. Told me, "You're losers and you're never gonna make it!" Then I started knocking things over, and this bitch tells me, "Oh just stop, you're being totally uncool!" So I overturned the Parmesan cheese in her beer. The next night, Oral B. Good and Alien Rock walked into the same restaurant, with their makeup on, and ate fifty dollars worth of food and walked out on their bill!

Well they said they tried to pay, and no one would pay attention to them, so they got tired of waiting...

S: Sure!

Yikes, Budweiser seems to bring out the gross like nothing else!

S: You're totally right. I don't even need Fearless Leader when I've had a few Budweisers to get sleepy. Flytrapper and I go golfing a lot now, and we've been known to dump out all the water in the ball washers and piss in there, so the next guy washes his balls in piss. And one time, I had to piss really bad

out on the green and there was nobody around so I filled the hole with piss.

Did you have even a twinge of guilt while you were desecrating that graveyard in the "Little Devil" video?

S: No, I've been desecrating graves since I was a little kid, Dickie. I think I desecrated my first grave around eleven or twelve years old. We used to break into the Jewish cemetery

and lay the people down so they weren't standing up no more. Us Catholics took offense to that standing straight up bullshit.

So you did it for God?

S: Oh yeah. We didn't want 'em to go to hell. 'Cause if you're standing straight up like that, it's like you're in an elevator, straight to hell. You gotta be lying down. 'Cause your soul's in the bottom of your feet, you know, like your sole...never mind. But we do everything for God. Or is that Satan? I get them confused.

Like the Catholic School show?

S: Oh God! For some reason, Flytrapper had us booked at this Catholic Elementary School fair, outside, and the minute we got there I knew it was going to be a bad scene. There was all these ex-high school jock Catholic boy bouncers standing around, and the band before us thought they

were U2 or something. We had Flytrapper in the band back then, so you know we sounded like shit.

And Snider too!

S: Yeah, and the thing was, we told this Catholic kid we weren't playing until we had 24 beers on stage, so we got up there and stood around for ten minutes and waited for this kid, and sure enough, here he comes with 24 full beers! So then we stood around and drank every one of them before we started playing. So we started playing, and we were Godawful loud, every third word out of my mouth was "Fuck this" or "Fuck that." And this bouncer kid comes up to me and says, "You guys will have to get off the stage, you're offensive!" And we were, but we wouldn't shut up. By the third song, they were looking seriously ready to kick my ass, so I just took my guitar off and said, "Okay you pricks, let's do it now!" And they got out of my face, let us finish our set. My friends in the audience said I looked like a crazed clown up there.

A: Did you know that Mike Snider puked just thinking about eating Spam one time?

So I'm trying to get to the bottom of this, Sarge, I mean, what's your motivation? Why do you do this?

S: (Long pause.) It's not that deep, Dickie, not even close. We seem to offend feminists and vegetarians the most. If there's a vegetarian or a feminist in the audience, they're in my face before the first three songs are over. Actually the only real altercation with a fan was at the El Paso Cantina in Long Beach. We'd made these big sign for "Sunshine Superstar," like when we shout "Peace!" we hold up a peace sign, holler "Love" and hold up a big heart, "War!" and a big dollar sign, and "Hate!" we hold up a swastika. And this Nazi skinhead comes onstage and grabs the swastika and runs off with it. I grabbed him by shirt, like "What are you doing!" and he gave me this look like he was going to kill me for this cardboard piece of shit, so I was just, "Dude, take it!" And that's all he wanted. Probably going to put it on his wall next to his picture of Jesus.



PHOTO BY BRAD SMITH

SARGE WORKIN' THE MEAT INTO THE SHOW

The Mudwimmin

The best way I can describe the Mudwimmin is cohesive chaos. These four women defy most people's interpretations of what a rock and roll band should be. They constantly switch instruments, they all are the "lead singer" so there's no front person, they seem to play four different songs at once yet somehow manage to make it all come together. Live they're unpredictable, sometimes dressing in bizarre costumes, singing 70s disco songs in acappella style or just getting in your face screaming. No show is the same twice. After their set, and on the final day of their tour, we interviewed this road weary band. By Dave Gomez



photo by Don Lewis

(L to R) Mia d'Bruzzi, Bambi Nonymous, Rachel Thoele, Lisa Fay and Ward

Dave: So what are you saying about L.A., this trip is not as good as the last trip?

Rachel: I guess you are not supposed to say stuff like that.

Mia: It seems like there is not as much air as last time but I slept well.

Bambi: Awfully

Mia: I slept once.

Rachel (to Evan): Are you a cancer man? (Evan hands her a cigarette.) Well, what do you want to know about us?

Dave: You added a new member, who is this person?

Lisa: Ward.

Ward: I'm Tonto.

Mia: No, it's Pocahontas.

Rachel: We are the most luckiest girls in the whole world!

Bambi: Poke him till he haunts.

Ward: I wish!

Mia: He plays sexyphone.

Bambi: He wears a crown royal bag on his scrotum.

Ward: That has been one of my costumes.

Bambi: He's very enthusiastic.

Mia: And a great sexyphone player.

Rachel: More texture.

Dave: More noise?

Rachel: More texture.

Mia: He's our sister.

Bambi: He's not heavy.

Ward: They're all started to menstruate at the same time and I think I'm going to too.

Mia: He used to be Mr. POLKACIDE and he still is, so here is some history for you.

Rachel: He is the guy who played in "SEX BOMB" with Flipper.

Evan: Really.

Mia (singing): He is the world... and Rachel and I were in Frightwig together.

Dave: And you played in Tragic Mulatto.

Bambi: Yeah, I played in Tragic Mulatto.

Rachel: Come on, these people need something to write about.

Dave: So the last time you were here you talked about the infamous "Norm" story. (George Wendt who plays Norm on the T.V. show "Cheers") So what exactly happened?

Mia: Oh fuck!

Bambi: He urinated on our bumper. What can I say? We smoked a joint with him, he asked for our autograph. He said that he liked the show (at Raji's). He was obviously extremely drunk.

Rachel: So that doesn't say much.

Rachel: Bambi massaged him and knows he is a pervert.

Mia: So is Gordon of Sesame St. They are all perverts.

Bambi: Yeah, Gordon from Sesame St. came in (to the massage parlor) and asked for a handjob.

Rachel: God, now it will happen like Pee-Wee. Maybe we'll get Gordon in trouble...

Bambi: The mailman from Cheers also came in and wanted me to dress up like Rachel was tonight. Pretend I was ten years old with real big tits. And I said, "But you're on Cheers, I can't do that". Who else in show business can we slander?

Darby (to Ward): What do you do for a living?

Ward: I'm a cab driver. I use to be a bookie but then I got arrested so now I'm a cabdriver.

Darby: Which is safer?

Ward: A bookie. No one puts a gun up to my head and takes my money.

with the sax everything. It was really noisy like that.

Bambi: Well as long as you don't say we sound like the Butthole Surfers.

Mia: Or L7 or the Lunachicks.

Bambi, Rachel, and Mia: (in a foreign accent) Are you a all-girl band? Are you a heavy metal thrash band? Like L7?

Ward: I think we sound like Woody Herman.

Mia: I think my favorite part of tonight's show is when Lisa shrimped me. (Laughs) Very sexy.

Ward: Did you feel sexy tonight?

Mia: Yea!

Ward: One of Mudwimmin's mythology revolves around friends and shrimping.

Krk: What happened to your teeth? Did you get in to a fight?

Ward: All four of them!

Mia: Very close.

Rachael: Sometimes those fights are closer then we think.

Mia: It must be worse being in an all-woman band. I never asked him.

Bambi: Poor guy.

Ward: I have a complex.

Mia: He's really good, and he's fun to tour with.

Bambi: He's a really great player. Oh my God! Inspiring!

Rachel: But he wants to have sex all the time.

Darby: I was wondering.

Rachel: The only problem.

Mia: Don't you?

Rachel: No, not with everyone I meet. I mean not someone who is my friend, not necessarily. I'm not like you.

Mia: I like having sex with my friends, I'm sorry!

Rachel: I know but I don't like having sex with ALL my friends.

Mia: I don't have sex with all my friends.

Rachel: There's very few people I'd like to have sex with.

Darby: Small conflict here.

Krk: Don't hit her! She's the only one with teeth!

Rachel: We are the four stages of premenstruation, menstruation, ovulation, and post-menstruation. (Laughs.)

Dave: When I saw you before people were comparing you to the Butthole Surfers, but the Surfers have no jazz in them, which I think you do.

Rachel: What's so jazzy about us besides the sax?

Dave: The bassline, the rhythmic drums, improvising...

Ward: I think the "Man across the Street" walking bassline is real jazzy.

Rachel: But that's pretty much the only one, isn't it?

Ward: That's the only one I can think of but I think I can understand what he's getting at

Rachel: But that word "jazz" really scares me.

Darby: What was he saying, it was Steve Ratter from Slug, he said "lesbian."

Lisa: I hate that word.

Rachel: That was a question somebody asked once, "What percentage of the band is lesbian?", and there isn't really a percentage of the band that's lesbian. There might be percentage that's bisexual, I'd like to make that clear!

Lisa: There is no way to make it clearer. There is a major percentage of the band that doesn't like labels.



photo by Don Lewis (he sure gets around doesn't he?)

Mia: We don't discriminate.

Rachel: Like 100% of the band.

Mia: No labels. No labels. No labels.

Dave: Well, that's one thing about the band, you do a lot of things that many bands don't do, for instance switching instruments constantly.

Darby: How did that get started? It's good to have a different front person cause you can always relate to certain people in the band as opposed to just having one person be the "lead".

Rachel: We all like to do everything, we've always been like that.

defies being categorized, that's why I like it. (Band claps)

Darby: So each person that writes the lyrics does the singing?

Bambi: Yeah, bits and pieces, like that song Mia and I sing together. She wrote the body of the "Body Song" and little things that were in my head I added.

Darby: Do you have anything out?

Mia: We have two singles out, one of them is on Imp Records out of Portland. The other one is on Big Dog Records out of L.A. and Big Dog is also doing a CD which is coming out soon, soon, soon!

Darby: Is there a reason? Is that how you decided it was going to be?

Rachel: We didn't decide, we just all like to play everything so when we're making up songs we would all trade off so we could play everything.

Evan: Frightwig did that too?

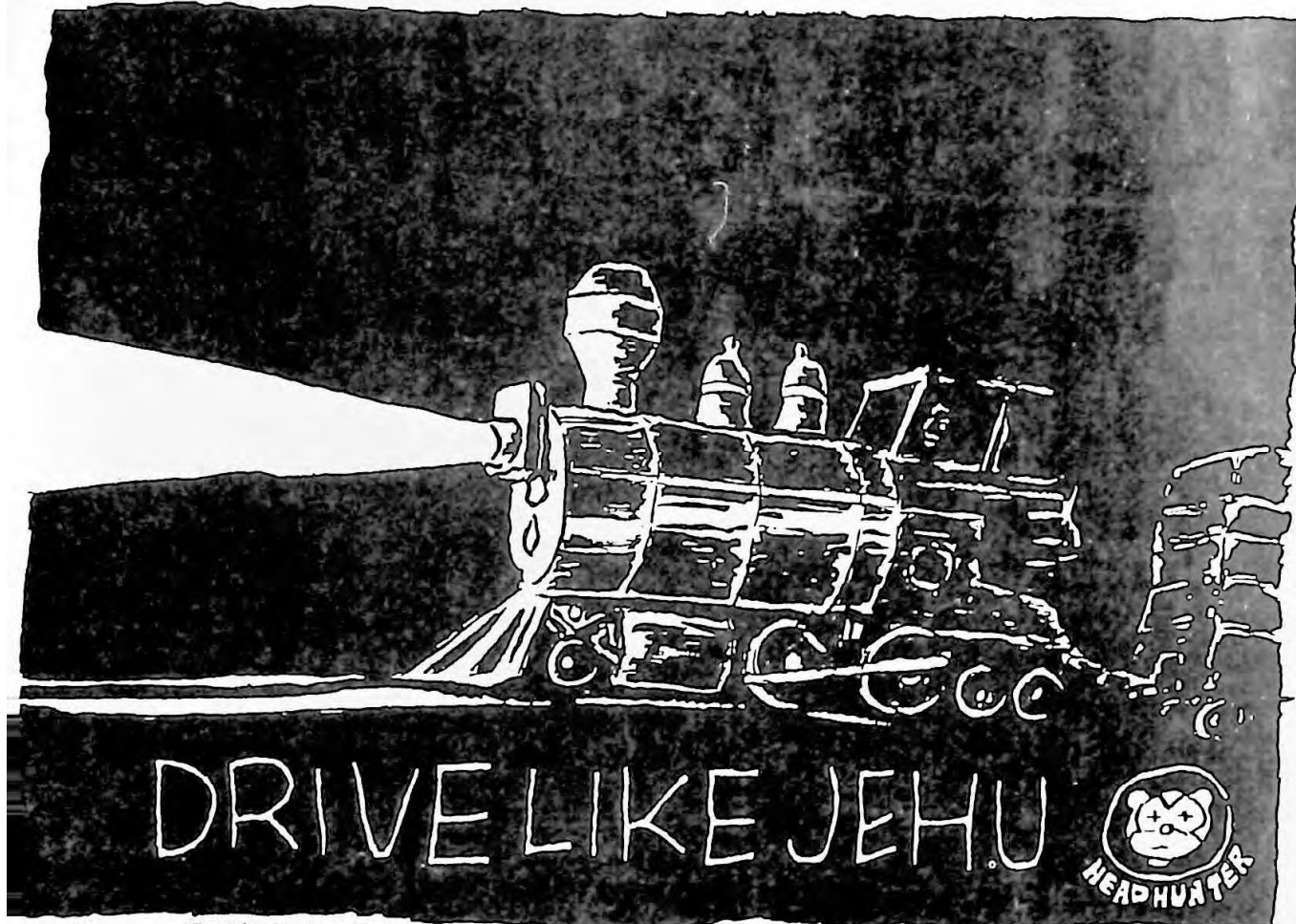
Mia: Yea, we did.

Evan: Just drummers and singers if I remember correctly.

Bambi: Tragic Mulatto didn't which is partially why I got into Mudwimmin again. I missed it.

Rachel: Most of the bands I've been in don't do that.

Bambi: I liked being able to have a very limited, short attention span and be free to express, have something to say with drums. You can only say so much with each instrument. Plus it makes every song sound different. It



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PHOENIX

COMPILED BY DON LEWIS

A VISITOR'S GUIDE

You may find it hard to believe but downtown Phoenix is alive with culture. The tumbleweeds have been swept away and the horses were shot years ago. The streets are now paved regardless of what you may read about this southwestern town in the nationally available magazines. Very few of us still wear our cowboy hats although you're more than welcome to wear yours when visiting. This visitor's guide to Phoenix touches upon the bigger multi-media spaces, leaving the smaller galleries and artists' lofts to be discovered when you're in town. Enjoy yourself and watch out for the rattlesnakes that slither up and down the street every day. Yee-haw!
By Peter Petrisko Jr.

ALWUN HOUSE

"When we opened up in 1971, people thought we were way out in the middle of nowhere," co-founder and director Kim Moody reminisces. Located a mile or two from the heart of downtown, Moody has witnessed the arts community blossom and grow around him over the course of the last two decades. This three story Victorian style house has hosted a number of activities over the years. Mime, multimedia theatre, and visual art has been presented on a regular basis. Programming includes a Thursday night coffeehouse, which features local poets and musicians, and an evening of alternative dance music on alternate Fridays. Each spring brings the Exotic (read: Erotic) Art Show, a group exhibition of work that tempts and toys with the viewer. One upcoming event, scheduled for mid-January, is an exhibition of both traditional and contemporary work by Native American artists to commemorate, as Moody puts it, "500 Years of Survival and Triumph". Some people may complain that Alwun doesn't have a specific focus, but the name IS the focus. Alwun equals "all one", all art and music under one roof. If it works for twenty years don't fix it.

GALLERY X

Opened during the blistering summer of 1989, Gallery X regularly features visual art by local artists and hosts experimental bands passing through town. Both home-tapers and bigger name acts have passed through these walls. A bimonthly series of performance art and video, called *Experiendica Discord*, has become a crowd favorite over the last year or so. A popular annual event is the Noisefest, an all day "jam" featuring local experimental musicians and tape loops sent in from all four corners of the planet. To give you an idea of the programming, this summer saw concerts by Zoviet-France and Crash Worship, plus an evening of film by Nick Zedd (who looked remarkably well for supposedly being dead, according to Film Threat). The magazine X is published from the space and contains interviews with and reviews of individuals/groups working along these same experimental avenues. Slides are now being accepted for a juried exhibition featuring independent women artists. The show will be titled "Off Our Backs". It has been business as unusual at this space despite a literal feeding frenzy by the local media, jockeying to cover alternative art, with Gallery X at the center of attention in the last few months.

SILVER DOLLAR CLUB

A cavernous club with a schizophrenic past. When the Silver Dollar opened in early 1991 you'd show up not knowing what to expect. It could have been heavy metal night or possibly disco until the wee hours. This started to change when John Commerford,

now an independent promoter, was brought on board. During his tenure, things slowly turned around. Commerford brought large industrial acts of the Wax Trax variety. Dance music, from psychedelic house beats to industrial grunge, was put on permanent rotation in the weekend slot. Shows appeared to get bigger and better, and even after Commerford's departure this summer, this trend continues. Both dance evenings continue, with popular Phoenix/L.A. DJ Chris Flores spinning every Friday evening. Co-owner and acting manager Bob Miller sees the club as a cornerstone for redeveloping downtown. Rising just one block away is the city-supported America West Arena. At one point, the possibility of the club being bought and turned into the Silver Dollar Parking Lot was very real. Not any longer, according to Miller. "The vast amount of redevelopment closer to the center of downtown leaves us in the clear here on the edges. When the basketball/multimedia arena opened, we could only benefit."

Miller is steadfastly against changing his club to fit the taste of what will undoubtedly be a more yuppie crowd, attracted by the antics of the NBA. "We want to maintain the atmosphere of warehouse bar. It won't be gussied up, but the aesthetics will change regularly. This is a full-fledged bar, but we want it to be complementary to the alternative art spaces downtown."

While the Silver Dollar is no longer in the business of in-house promoting, it does work with a number of different promoters (including the aforementioned Commerford). A recently started monthly series titled "On the Fringe" follows in the footsteps of similar successful programs at other venues. Experimental music, performance art and poetry readings are featured. The club will offer many types of music events into the foreseeable future, from national acts to local bands, from punk to industrial and beyond the alternative edges of rock.

SUBCULTURAL ARTS CENTER

This space opened in August full of inspiring ideas and innovative directions. Many of these could have placed it at the forefront of the Phoenix art scene. The art director at the time pitched the space as a multi-use facility. SAC was to be available as an "open studio" for local artists to create in daily. A crafts program for children, many from neighboring low income areas, was another proposed program. Some of these plans seem to have departed with the art director. Instead, co-owner Randy Blankenship (an interim art director) offers a few new ideas for this airy warehouse located on the third floor of a building in the thick of the downtown business district.

"We will be opening the space up as an open studio after the first of the year, and encourage local artists to get in touch if interested. Also we're adding the idea of a Smart Bar on Friday nights, which would blend fruit juices and an ever-popular blend of smart drugs. This idea came about since we don't have a liquor license at this time," explains Blankenship.

A lack of a liquor license has added more than ideas. It has also added the overwhelming interest of the Phoenix police department. In early November, the space was rented out to a promoter for a private party, which ironically has given the Subcultural Arts Center its most public exposure yet.

The crowds are slowly coming back, but backlash from the raid may not leave much to come back and see. Two different promoters have pulled S.N.F.U. and Soundgarden respectively. In the course of writing this article, I have found out that



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Frontier Records will not book any of its acts in the space, in direct response to the raid. Due more to circumstance rather than choice, the venue may have to concentrate on local talent for the time being.

"We're now shooting for a lower-key club atmosphere, with an emphasis on visual art. We'll shortly be adding a weekly evening of experimental music, and a fun, self-explanatory evening called Black Light Bingo."

The unfortunate events of early November may give Blankenship and friends the time to cultivate some of the original art plans that could still put SAC on the map in a more positive light.

LOVE/HATE PRODUCTIONS

Love/Hate was set up to promote downtown and the artists living there. "Downtown Phoenix is where I live and work," founder Peter Ragan explains, "and it could be the most vital part of the city. It probably already is, although that isn't saying a whole hell of a lot." A little cynicism is refreshing. Most of the Love/Hate presentations have featured local performance artists and musicians at the city-owned Third Street Theater. Unfortunately, the city has recently made budget cuts and the theater's technical staff is now virtually nonexistent. That hasn't kept Ragan down. He's put Love/Hate on the back burner as of late and has opened a storefront called Metropophobobia, which roughly translates as "the unnatural fear of metropolitan Phoenix." Featured are a wide array of small press publications and cassette-only experimental music releases. "Where else can you find a copy of *Semiotexte*, *Yellow Silk*, or *Murder Can Be Fun?*," Ragan asks.

O-TU STUDIOS / ORPHANAGE RECORDS

With the disintegration of Placido Records a few years ago, these two labels are filling the void. O-Tu Studios hit the ground running one year ago with a compilation of local alternative music, *Just Another Human Sacrifice*. The label is now working with a number of bands that appeared on this collection, including the moody synth-pop duo In Scarlet and Vile (who recently opened for Book of Love to great audience response), experimental trance/dance collective Hernia Retraction Accordion, and the Bowiesque new wave inspired Of Men And Angels (formerly the Greyz).

Orphanage Records both produces and distributes music. Upcoming releases include a compact disc from the infamous Theatre of Ice and an ambitious double cassette compilation of experimental music from around the globe, packaged in a ceramic jaw bone. The label will be steering away from the guitar-heavy post-punk sound of past vinyl and concentrating more on electronic/experimental releases.

So there you have it. The spaces that run contrary to the city's vision of an arts district. Labels that release music that doesn't fit in with the rather anemic playlists of local radio. Work and personalities that go against the grain of what the local press would, until very recently, cover. How did you find out about the real downtown Phoenix? You had to read about it in a magazine from L.A. Welcome to Phoenix.

RESOURCE LIST

GALLERYS/CLUBS

ALWUN HOUSE, 1204 E. Roosevelt, 85006-3454, Kim Moody, director
(602)253-7967 direct, (602)253-7887 msg.
CRASH ARTS, 429 W. Jackson St. 85003 (602)256-6333
GALLERY X, 800 W. Madison, 85007 (602)420-9390
OBLIQUE GALLERY, 1400 N. College, Tempe (602)968-2625
MARS ARTSPACE, 130 N. Central, 85036 (602)253-3541
SILVER DOLLAR CLUB, 417 E. Madison, 85004 (602)258-0667
SUBCULTURAL ARTS CENTER, 130 N. Central Ave., 3rd Flr. 85004
(602)256-0667

RECORD STORES

EASTSIDE RECORDS, 217 W. University, Tempe (602)968-2011
METROPOPHOBIA, 128 E. Taylor, 85004 (602)255-0668
ZIA RECORD EXCHANGE, 105 W. University, Tempe 85281, Matt
(602)829-1967
ZIA RECORD EXCHANGE, 2510 W. Thunderbird, (602)866-7867
ZIA RECORD EXCHANGE, 3607 E. Bell (602)482-3119
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PHASE 4 STUDIOS, 1700 W. Drake, Ste. 1, Tempe, 85284, Michelle
Colé (602)345-8377
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DAVID THERRIEN AND CRASH



Recently I've been drawn to an inspirational and unique outgrowth of "alternative" energy in Phoenix. The first thing I noticed at CRASH Arts was the way people banded together, instead of trying to out-cool each other. What CRASH and its founder David Therrien have in mind is nothing short of a total environmental complex where all sorts of things can happen — the imagination being the only limit. Artists will be able to create freely with access to the latest equipment and information, and the public will be able to experience the artwork in a complete environment, never having to leave until they've slaked their thirst for culture. Sound like a pipe dream? Well, at this point, it's just getting off the ground, but after attending the memorial service for George Dillon at the complex last March, and visiting again last April for the CRASH Grand Prix, I have a feeling the dream will become reality. David and I talked in a small room off one of the cavernous galleries, sitting on the floor with his dogs Rhino and Crack.

DON LEWIS: What does CRASH stand for?

DAVID THERRIEN: I'm not sure if it stands for anything in particular. We make up things that it stands for. It's more of an attitude we present our artworks with, whether they be performance, music or installations. It's an attitude of innovation and experimentation. Sometimes it's pristine artworks presented in a very rough environment, sometimes very rough artworks presented in a rough environment. I think the environment helps frame what we do. That's why we've always been very interested in the architecture of the buildings we present work in, which is why our last location was a steel mill, and this location a former ice factory. It's not just your average warehouse space.

Even an average warehouse would be kind of rough. What do you like in particular about the ice house complex? The big room is especially beautiful.

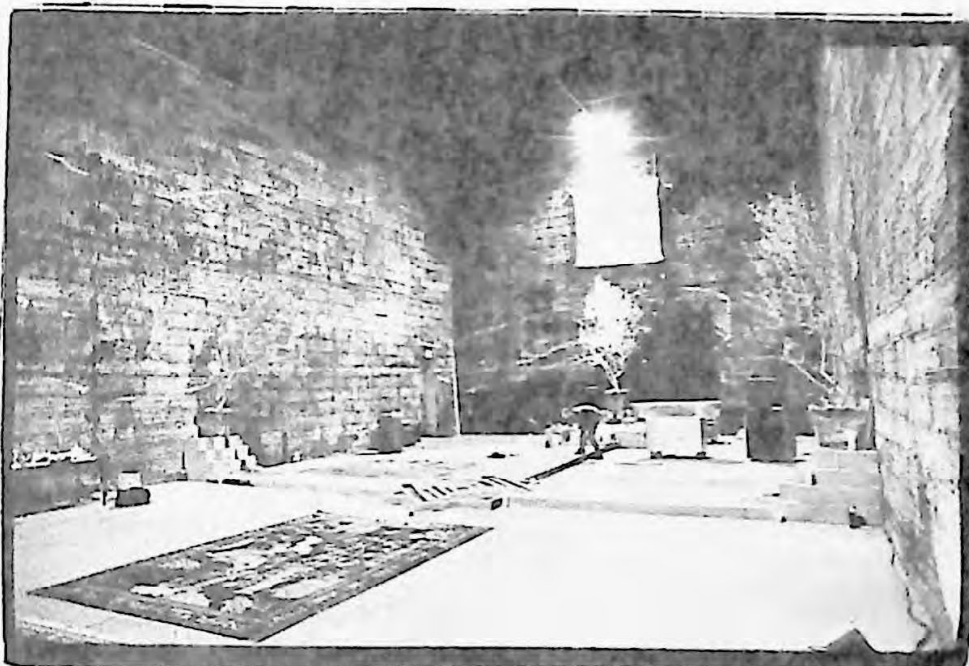
It's very majestic, almost cathedral-like. It brings another dimension to the artwork shown in it. The acoustics of the space even start to affect you. I think it makes good artwork even better and great art phenomenal. The building we're in now, which is the ice rooms, with columns and everything, has such a massive feel.

Kind of like the interior of a pyramid. Not like a tomb, but like a big, cavernous...

Yeah, very cavernous space, with 18-inch thick walls, huge columns—

What does CRASH do for the community, how does it apply to Phoenix and the rest of the world?

We provide a forum for Phoenix that didn't exist before. A lot of artists exhibiting here from out-of-state have told us this kind of space doesn't exist in other parts of the country, although I think there must be other spaces with the same kind of attitude. We provide a home for a lot of artists who aren't in the mode of galleries or museums. There are a lot of people that wouldn't have the opportunity to show their artwork, and a lot of individuals that would never see artwork if it weren't for CRASH, because they don't go to the galleries and museums, so we tend to



THE CATHEDRAL ROOM

photo by Don Lewis

break in a new audience, although we still pull that small portion you would also find at gallery and museum openings. But we present work in a very different way, more as an event where you come and see performances, installations, everything in a wonderful combination of stimuli. And so far, people have always found something to identify with in some way. Something can amaze them, other things might disgust them. So you can be amazed and astounded and moved, all in the same night by different works. And because the space is so large, almost 40,000 square feet, there's lots of little places to escape to and see different things, although that will be changing; we'll be using portions of the complex for other uses besides the exhibition of art. We're going to have a

cafe, a nightclub, a technology center for artists...

What will they do in the technology center?

ATEC, or Artists Technology Access Center, is going to be an arm of CRASH Arts. We will be making facilities available for artists from around the country to come and work with technology, primarily computers and computer peripherals, that they usually wouldn't have access to, even at universities.

High end stuff

Yeah, very high end equipment.

How do you get the funding for this?

From the companies that make the equipment, and also from some of the companies that benefit from the technology industry as a whole. We think the interface between

A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO PHOENIX

artists and high technology can be very beneficial for industry. Aiding industry is our primary goal. (laughs) But that's the reasoning we use when we go to a sponsor and ask them to try something with us, try a particular project, because there are things that artists will do when they have access to the equipment, that their engineers and technicians will never think of. Artists have different goals in mind when they're working with the equipment, so they accomplish different things. Those accomplishments could be beneficial to both groups of people: industry and the arts community. So that's a real important project for us. Although in its infancy now, it could have a very powerful national effect. We hope to see more of this type of cooperation in other cities, because it's a big industry and not that many artists are out there working with the technology.

Are you also putting in a library?

Yeah, we're putting an information library on the third floor, covering everything from art to technology, politics, the types of things artists use for influence and inspiration. Whether you could use information about corrupt politicians for inspiration or not I don't know (laughs), but so much information out there can be gathered from so many different places. We're looking at a fairly eclectic library, primarily arts publications, artists' books, poetry, a lot of publications you may not find in a regular library, that we think will be useful to patrons of the library.

Will it stock things like Amok Books in L.A.?

Somewhat like that. I think with Amok there's a lot of things that have kind of a purist appeal, but we're looking at more than that, kind of a wider scope. Maybe this is the place where you'd be able to find out what artists are doing in India or Thailand. Libraries are changing from what we've known them to be in the past. They're not just books. They're information in general, a huge database. And it's an ideal forum for networking. You can go in and find out about an art space, gallery or publication in some part of the world that you would be able to use in some way, either for studies, to find an exhibition, or just to find some information.

Are there other rooms in the buildings we haven't covered?

We have a room to the rear of the complex, which will be a nightclub, with a mezzanine. It should be one of the best places to see concerts in the city, designed exclusively for live music and performance, so the stage will be high enough to always give a good sight line, and at the same time large enough for groups to have plenty of room to move around. We could stage large things like choirs, real crazy things.

You do lighting design too, don't you?

Yeah, that's what I have to do to make a living at this point, at least until this project takes off, doing primarily high-end nightclubs that are looking for something very different.

You did the Mayan Theatre.

Right, I did the Mayan in Los Angeles. I'm doing another new club in Phoenix right now called Zone. It's a nightclub that won't really feel like a regular nightclub at all. It won't have your standard disco lights or anything like that. I'm custom-making all the lighting fixtures, and they're very strange. With the Mayan also, there were no nightclub-type lighting fixtures. The entire building was lit theatrically to take advantage of the architectural space. That's where my lighting comes in. I play off the architecture, instead of going into a warehouse space and just hanging a bunch of lights up in the air.

Let's talk a little about your work. This whole complex is your work in a way, and the organi-



COMFORT CONTROL'S INTERPRETATION OF
DAVINCI'S "UNIVERSAL MAN" AT CYBER ARTS 91.
MICHAEL HUDSON (TOP), DAVID THERRIEN (BOTTOM)

zation of people that use it and work in it.

Yeah, it's kind of taken over from my artwork in the last year or so. I've only been able to do one performance in the last year, the last several years actually. But I do look at this thing as a huge conceptual project, the conceptual element being its effect. When we're done, we're going to have this magnificent building and installation. The building was pretty run-down when we started. We're gradually defining the spaces primarily through demolition: taking out all the internal walls and exposing the core or guts of the building, almost bringing it back to a raw state...

So you can put new things in it, redefine it once it's cleared away...

Yeah, we clear it back to the basic materials, then come in and improve it *our way*, with a very defined aesthetic

approach to the way the building should interact with people.

How do you define your aesthetic approach?

It's something that totally comes from my gut, I guess, when I look at a space. When you step into these spaces you'll feel you're not in Phoenix. You won't be quite sure where you are. That's what can be done when changing the materials, the space, and just the flow of the building. Also, the courtyard is still basically an empty space, and when we're done, it will feel the most changed. We're going to rip out all the asphalt and build a kind of landscaped oasis of fountains, sculpture and mosaics. The outdoor spaces are important, because sometimes you need to be able to get away from the buildings, too. We think people will come here and stay for hours and hours.

Where do you get the funding for all this? Isn't it pretty expensive?

To fund this whole project, we put together a corporation and partnership and raised money that way. Also, the City of Phoenix is helping us out through a historical grant, so we can adapt the building for modern use as an art gallery and bring thousands of people into the space.

Have you put any of your own money into this?

I put some of my own money into it. I don't have much money, but most of my time has gone into it. The last four years I haven't worked on the projects I usually do. I've been working on this project exclusively, aside from stopping for a few months to design the lighting for the Mayan. This has been it, so in that respect, I've invested a couple hundred thousand dollars just in time. But we've already made that money pretty much because we bought the building at much less than market value. This building in Los Angeles would probably cost \$4 or \$5 million, and we bought it for way under half a million dollars. So I figure it's already added value.

How do you get the city on your side, with all this support?

Phoenix is in a very strange predicament. It's a major American city, but culturally it's had real problems. I think its proximity to Los Angeles is one of the things that hurts it most. We have what we call "artist flight" here. I have more friends that are artists from Phoenix in San Francisco than I have friends that are artists in Phoenix because we tend to be a city that exports our talent instead of importing it, and our projects have been designed in a way to combat that.

We provide a forum for local artists, to venture out to when they feel they have no place to call their own, where they can really be stimulated, a place that's exciting. We also bring in a lot of artists from out of state, from Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York and Chicago, from all around the country. So the artists and audience here are able to see what's going on in other parts of the country.

Because of that, we've managed to establish a very strong reputation in the arts community. When the "powers that be" (the city council is the main group we've been working with) asked people about us, they heard good things. This was when we were doing CRASH at our old location, the steel mill. We had been doing very unusual but very fun projects. For example, we brought Brett Goldstone's L.A. Steamworks out in 1987 and it was a

A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO PHOENIX

great show. It was a lot of fun, yet challenging and confrontational at the same time. So they realized we weren't the symphony, the opera, the theater company or the ballet, but we were just as critical a part of the community as those cultural organizations. We tended to be a lot more grassroots, and didn't have the fundraising capabilities of the more traditional organizations. Our board of directors isn't stacked with the heads of all the major utilities and big local corporations, but it has — I think, for the people who are on it — just as much influence as having someone who's the head of Greyhound Corporation, because we've had a famous artist or a famous art collector, people who really knew about what we were doing. We didn't think it made sense bringing in people to help us who really didn't know what we were doing.

We're actually still in a very seminal stage at this point. Although our organization has been around for over five years, we haven't really hit our stride yet. We've been in this building now for little over a year. We've had just four events in it and they've been fairly large scale, but they aren't even close to what we'll be doing here. Our board of directors hasn't even begun to feel the amount of pressure that they're going to be put under with the kind of things we're planning in the future.

Meaning, "How are we going to get the council to buy this one?"

Well, we would have to do the council fundraising, because we need a lot more money than the arts commission could ever give us, a lot more help than the city could ever afford to give us, even though they want to be able to see us do really interesting things to make them look good.

It's amazing to me how the city council wouldn't be freaked out by some of the things they saw... It's just the kind of thing I think the establishment wouldn't like.

I think we actually have a very progressive city council and mayor in Phoenix. The mayor's my age, he's 31.

Is he a Republican, Democrat?

He's a Democratic mayor and the council is pretty much evenly balanced now. Another thing that's helping us is our attitude, which is one of total success. This is going to happen and nothing is going to stop us.

Yeah. That helps.

We're going to see this entire neighborhood transformed. The City likes that because that's what they want, too. We're just south of the downtown area, real close to the Hyatt Regency, the basketball arena, and all these things. The City knew they needed someone like us to come down here first, because they weren't going to be able to find some developer that was going to come in here and build some art shopping mall or some cultural —

One of the things you mentioned has a lot to do with another attitude that we have at CRASH, which is that artists shouldn't have to pay to exhibit their work. We wanted to provide a forum where we could afford to pay artists to exhibit their work and not be in a gallery-like situation, where they trade all their art work and then maybe they'll sell something. That's not our orientation here at all. We try to pay the artists directly for exhibiting work, and provide them with the opportunity to exhibit in a noncommercial way, which we think is one of your best

ways of supporting art and artists.

Where does the money for paying the artists come from?

From admissions, usually. We feel that if you're gonna come and have a great evening looking at artwork and seeing performances, you should be able to pay \$5 or \$10 or \$15, same as going to the movies. You don't see the movie for free; you have to pay to see the movie. It's a very

thought "This is the one one he's gonna get signed for," but it's something that very rarely happens to Phoenix bands, and even when it does, it somehow doesn't seem to work out for them.

Not only did George present his own work, he was really interested in the success of the Phoenix music scene as a whole. Back in the early 80s, he started putting on these Industrial Dances, which were major concerts



photo by Don Lewis

CEREMONIAL BURNING OF GEORGE DILLON'S BELONGINGS

capitalistic method in a different way. We're not saying, "Everyone come and look for free, and maybe one of you out there will buy a piece of artwork and pay for the evening's fun," [because] then again, maybe you won't. (Here the tape ends. Next, we talk about George Dillon, a luminary poet on the Phoenix scene who died recently.) That was really a treat working with International Language [Dillon's project], so I joined about a year later to do lighting. It was a project that continually evolved for George. This extremely prolific poet wrote every day five or ten poems. He died this last March, March 8, quite unexpectedly, although we think it had to do with an accident he had on the way to an International Language show. He and I were riding in the back of a pickup truck when he fell out and landed on his head, and he had seizures ever since. But George went on after International Language to his next project, called Low Nature. Then he had a performance poetry project, then another rock band called The Keening which was himself and a bunch of really young kids—15, 16-year-olds. A very different kind of rock band.

Did any material come out of these projects, cassettes or anything?

Yeah, there's recordings of all these projects, way back. I have a good stock of International Language recordings.

Are they marketed and distributed or just private?

They sold cassettes, but never on a large scale. He never had a record contract, although every project he did, I

with five or six Phoenix bands and maybe an out-of-town band like Black Flag or Fear, various L.A. bands. These dances were wildly successful and gave bands like the Meat Puppets, J.F.A. and others their first chance to play in front of very big crowds. The Meat Puppets' first shows—not shows, but like practicing and stuff—were in George's living room, so he gave them their beginnings, as he did with a lot of Phoenix bands.

When we started CRASH in 1985, George was the only person who saw we were really struggling financially, and when he had extra money he would press a lot of money in our hands after a show. He could see that we had spent more money producing the show than we made at the door, but still did a really good show, because I always had to put my own money in to make the shows work. And George would help compensate for that. He was very interested in seeing it survive, because he'd seen so many places fail. I think he saw real potential in what we were doing, and he liked the way we were programming artwork, music, poetry, film, just a very eclectic mix of things in a very strange combination. For example, we'd have David Bostrom [brother of Derrick of Meat Puppets] open for Skinny Puppy with his Funston Eclectic Trio, which was a violin, flute and piano. We'd do really crazy things like that. And the guys from Skinny Puppy loved it, they thought it was a real kick. That's the kind of fun we try to foment.

George really thrived in that kind of atmosphere and started doing live poetry readings. But George's poetry

A VISITOR'S GUIDE TO PHOENIX

SAND HOLDS SAND BY GEORGE DILLON

DESERT DESERT
THE SAND OF YOUR EMBRACE
IS WHAT
I BUILD ON
IS ALL I HAVE TO BUILD ON
I'M HELD TO THAT DRIFT
WINDY WINDY TOUCH
HELD WITH ME
THE SAND OF YOUR EMBRACE
IS ALL I HAVE TO FILL WITH
HELD WITH
A SCRATCHED RELEASE
FAST WINDY TOUCH
HELD WITH ME

[UNTITLED] BY GEORGE DILLON

HE LIVES A LIFE
WHERE HE THINKS
NO-ONE HAS EVER
LIKED HIM MUCH.
SMOKES THE LAST
SMOKE A THOUSAND
TIMES A DAY.
DOESN'T LIKE TO READ
HIS POEMS OUT LOUD
IN PUBLIC BECAUSE
THEY MAKE HIM CRY
AND LAUGH AND WONDER.
AND THAT MAKES HIM
FEEL VERY SELF-CENTERED
AND TOO MUCH OUT-OF-
CONTROL. SO SOMETIMES
HE SINGS THEM WITH A BAND
SO THAT HE CAN HIDE BEHIND
SOMEONE WHEN LYRICS MAKE
HIM WEEP. THE GUITARIST IS A
GOOD PERSON TO HIDE BEHIND
IF HE DOESN'T MOVE AROUND
TOO MUCH. WHEN HE CRIES
HE HOPES THAT IF THERE IS
NOTHING HE CAN DO - NOWHERE
TO HIDE THAT THE TEARS
MIGHT LOOK LIKE DROPS
OF SWEAT ROLLING DOWN
HIS CHEEKS OR THAT
SOMETIMES WHEN THE
TEARS HAPPEN THAT IT
JUST DOESN'T MATTER. HE
LIVES A LIFE WHERE HE
THINKS NO ONE HAS
EVER LIKED HIM MUCH.
HE LIVES A LIFE
WHERE HE LOVES
ONLY BEAUTIFUL WOMEN
BECAUSE HE HAS NEVER
BEEN A BEAUTIFUL MAN BUT
ALWAYS A PRETTY GOOD
ACTOR. LIKE ANY PETTY
ACTOR HE IS BEST AT
FOOLING HIMSELF IN THE
ROLE HE'S TAKEN ON.



GEORGE DILLON

photo by Don Lewis

readings were never really just poetry readings. They were these fascinating performances, where he would become another character that was actually himself as a child. He had been able to take parts of his own life, mix them with parts of the life of this old man living behind him, and come up with this character that dealt with problems George had during his childhood with his family—really powerful pieces, called "Robert". Each was about ten minutes long, and started out with Robert as a little boy. But it's kind of a tirade, where George is Robert, he's Robert's mother, he's Robert's father. It was wonderful to listen to George because he was this huge man with a great voice. So those became real popular, and people liked to turn out just to see him do—

Psychodramas.

Yeah, it was very much like psychodramas. People would tell him to get together his poems for publishing, and he was just getting close to publishing his first book when he died, so now that process has to start all over again. Also, his latest music project has been this group Life Garden* which I felt was his most powerful music to date. It has qualities of, say, a group like Dead Can Dance, with lyrics that tend to be a little bit heavier, but very beautiful music.

It sounded a little like La Monte Young, with the long notes—

Yeah. Long, drawn-out, it definitely isn't dance music (laughs), but it's so beautiful. He felt a lot of his music and poetry since 1980 was about his anger and frustration with his family. In his last few months he started to work things out with his mother and sisters, so he was starting to feel at ease with himself, finally.

He was entering a new level.

Yeah. The music all of a sudden became beautiful, and it was very beautiful.

The beauty you arrive at after going through pain.

There's no beauty without pain, I guess. He knew his

darkest side, so maybe he'd seen his depths and knew how far he could go in either direction. But I think he wouldn't have been able to make music that beautiful had he not made this dark, angry music of the previous eight years. So I guess we're lucky he did that. The saddest part is, he's not around to give us anymore.

He was just starting to get there.

On the verge of breaking through. His last public appearance was at our Culture Awards on the 23rd of February. We played their latest tape that evening. I hadn't heard it before, and was amazed at how well it was starting to come together. I was thinking, "God this is it. These guys are on their way." George received his second Culture Award, this time for his new music project. These special CRASH Culture Awards are designed to recognize the achievements of musicians, artists and even businesses, corporations and volunteers that have made significant contributions to culture in this city.

There's a lot of energy in Phoenix, but the toughest thing is keeping people here.

That might be turning around. The tide might be turning.

I think it will, especially in the next couple of years as this street [Jackson St.] starts to come together. There needs to be a sense of community someplace in this city, either a single place like CRASH, or a group of places like this. When you start getting artists in close proximity it has a snowballing effect.

A critical mass.

Yeah. That critical mass is there, and all of a sudden you have a reason to stick around for another year. And then you stick around for that year and you have more of a reason to stick around for the next year because something's happening here.

**Life Garden, "Caught Between the Tapestry of Silence and Beauty," is available from Agni Music, P.O. Box 84031, Phoenix, AZ 85071-4031. \$7 ppd.*

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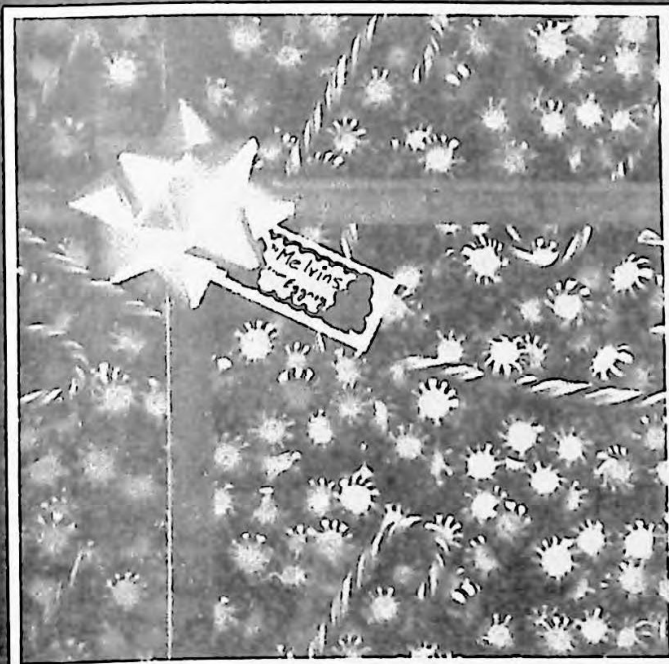
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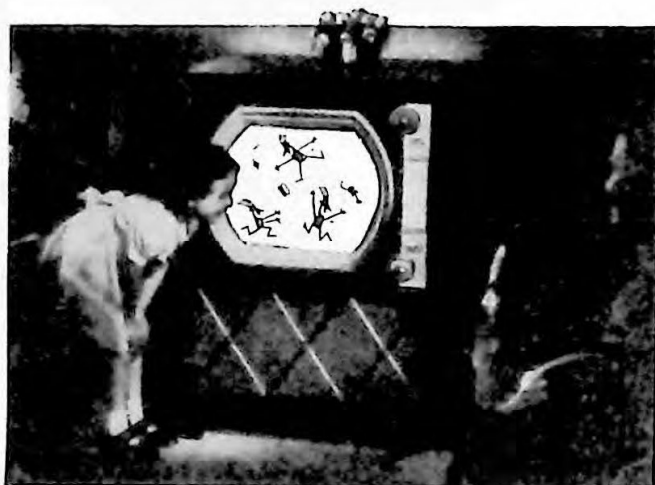
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SOUND AND ITS TECHNOLOGIES

COMPILED BY MIKKI HALPIN

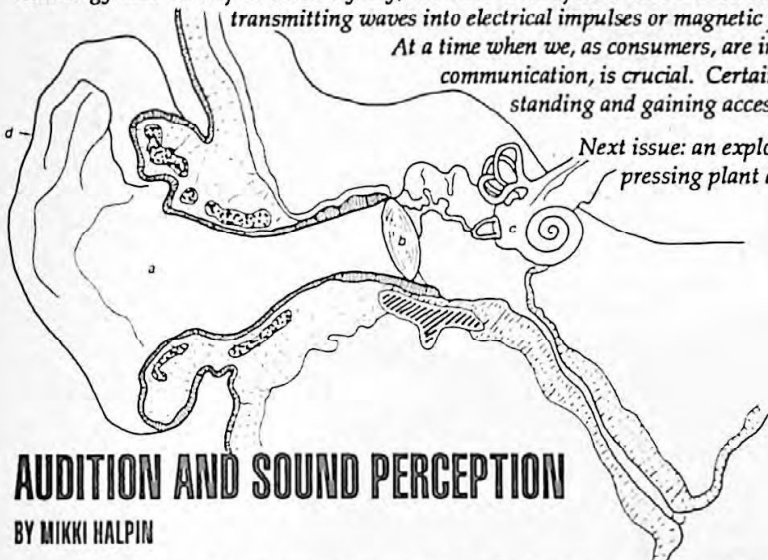
SOUND: RECEPTION & PRODUCTION

In school we learn that sound "travels" in waves. But where is it going? And where did it come from? To what degree can it be controlled? A sound is not an isolated event. It is a physical, mechanical phenomenon which can be produced, recorded, stored, and reproduced through various technologies and manipulations.

This section is intended to explore the possibilities of sound today, with an emphasis on available technology, from recording studios to the technology that most of us use every day, our ears. Both of these sites are transducers, devices which can change one form of energy into another, transmitting waves into electrical impulses or magnetic fluxes.

At a time when we, as consumers, are increasingly alienated from our desires, music, like all forms of communication, is crucial. Certain frequencies may be more amplified than others—only by understanding and gaining access to the means of production can we ourselves be heard. —Mikki

Next issue: an exploration of noise; Biff Sanders, Part 2; psychoacoustics; a visit to a pressing plant and to an all-digital home recording studio.



AUDITION AND SOUND PERCEPTION

BY MIKKI HALPIN

A sound is composed of three perceptual characteristics: pitch, loudness, and timbre. These characteristics are described physically as frequency, amplitude, and waveform, respectively. A sound wave is propagated by the transfer of energy from one molecule to another as they are jostled by an initial disturbance (ie, the vibration of a musical instrument). The wave, or energy transference, travels to the ear, which receives these pressures and their characteristics. As the waves then "hit" the eardrum they are transformed into mechanical vibrations, and sent to the inner ear—and are both amplified and limited along the way. The inner ear is a tiny chamber, filled with fluid, and lined with tiny hairs. These hairs react to the frequency of the vibration, depending upon their situation in the chamber, and send nerve impulses to the brain for synthesis.

The ear's sensitivity to noise has several phenomenal, subjective effects. Because the aural path of the ear is nonlinear, sounds interact with one another and sound effects can occur. Within the space of the inner ear, multiphonic sounds are sorted into their constituent tones. Amplitude, or intensity, affects perception in that the ear is only sensitive to a certain range of sound. The ability to distinguish between tones or notes varies along that range. Very loud sounds produce entirely different notes in the ear—notes that are not present at lower intensities. This is often referred to as harshness, or a distortion that occurs when, say, a piece of music is played at a level above that of its recorded capabilities. This effect may be due to imperfect acoustics in the inner ear, so that sound waves of a certain intensity cannot reverberate properly. If a note is played which is missing its fundamental tone, the surrounding harmonics are nonetheless perceived and the brain can synthesize the missing signal and "hear" it although it was never "played".

You can receive a sensation of tone or of noise. If the wave motion, or vibrating air particles, is simple and regular, with a smooth form, it is a tone. An irregular or complex sensation with a harsh waveform is termed a noise. Frequency, or pitch, is what creates harmony or dissonance. If one or more notes played together have resulting ratio that is a small, whole, number, the result is said to be euphonious. If the ratio is somehow skewed, the result is said to be dissonant. Noise is a mixture of several frequencies within a certain range; different noises are distinguishable by their different distributions of energy within the frequency range. Generally, musical sounds are considered to lie between these two sensations.

"12 REASONS" FOR ELIMINATION OF SOUND.

BY RICHARD POLYSORBATE 80°S

Being alive, in existence, on this God spit upon globe, is quite intolerable enough. To make our temporary stay even more hideous we've been subjected to the five senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, smell. The 6th, I suppose, would be excretion/defecation, which would only be fair since before we've even left the diaper stage our five senses have filled us up with so much shit aka feces that I ponder if the sixth (exspellment), aside from (dare I admit) enjoyable, seems to be a survival mechanism built-in so that at the age of nine months we don't all explode, spreading what the world and its people have jammed into us anywhere.

Now, it seems that out of the big 5 (the 6th having been dismissed, on account of saving graces) the culprit appears, to my reasoning, to be the sense of sound. In other words the ability to have all other senses diluted and stunted by the way of hearing which is what sound is if you think about it. Most of what you hear in life is gonna be against your will and just an intrusion of your will. Really, honestly, do you want to go through life having to hear, for the most part, ugly people hissing in your ear, tasteless music in public places, babies screaming and the people next door laughing at idiotic TV sitcoms? No! Just as I thought. Then do consider, even if momentarily, the 12 reasons for you to shove an icepick into those pounding, beating, eardrums and simply eliminate the rude belching and farting of the outside world in place of total pleasant, mind exploding silence. Sure it'll be painful at first. In the long run you'll be in for all the riches and harvest of a world you could never have dreamed of... a world without sound.

So, sterilize that icepick, get out those gauzes, pop the cap off the vodka and settle on down for the twelve reasons which will, surely, enlighten your decision that will, obviously, be appreciated by the senses of sight, touch, smell, & taste very, very much. So HERE they are in no order of importance.

"12 REASONS FOR ELIMINATION OF SOUND"

1) Since TV will make less sense (with, maybe, the exception of wildlife documentaries) you will be more prone to wasting your time reading which is

continued on next page

THE 12 ADVANTAGES OF BEING DEAF CONTINUED

better for you anyway, regardless.

2) Angry people will seem amusing rather than threatening.

3) Little, constant, aggravating sounds, (like dripping faucets, the man across the street hammering for no apparent reason and your parents, spouse, neighbors snoring, etc...) which have been known to turn the most insuspicious, mousey folks into exploding, psychotic mass murderers over a short period of time past the breaking point. It's those little, repetitive ticks 'n' locks that send us reeling into self-abandonment. Without sound, you're well protected.

4) You will be guiltlessly able to stick silly things out of your ears like straws or porcupine quills since it will hardly be of danger to you anyway. That parents quip "don't do that you will turn deaf" hardly means much to one who is.

5) Food will smell and taste better since you won't hear the annoying sounds it used to make, which fed the imagination with things that wilted those taste buds. Food doesn't need to be orchestrated with crunches, slurps, and chomping. Which brings us to...

6) Other people will be halfway tolerable to dine with since you won't have to listen to them repulsively suck, slurp, and lap up their food like they were overgrown flies or partaking in a sex act.

8) You won't have to concern yourself with what people say behind your back since you'll never hear them, again, anyways.

9) The telephone will become absolutely useless, as will your stereo, headphones, and alarm. These are all items you've been, throughout childhood, conditioned to need. In due time you'll realize their absolute worthlessness and be all the wiser for it.

10) You'll come to actual terms with the zenlike saying "in silence you can hear eternity." This will make you much wiser and more spiritually fortified than 97% of the pissbrained, raucous, uncouth, audiophile, vermin techers in America, a place much louder than necessary, anyways.

11) People dying in accidents, shoot-outs and other calamities won't seem so miserable since you won't be able to hear them scream, cry, yell or plead for their lives, which most people occupy their time with anyhow. Since death will not appear as menacing, it won't be on your minds as much. This in effect will make you age more naturally, give you an, overall, calmer disposition, better digestion and take away the drive of overindulgent, nihilistic behavior which only apes your fear of death, so you're much better off without it.

12) The job market will increase ten-fold for you since working among dangerous decibels of sound won't tamper your hearing. That means unheard of job opportunities at the airport, sheet metal house and much more. Being a busdriver, for example, would be much easier since the mixture of screeching children and blaring traffic wouldn't be a nuisance diverting your attention from driving.

—I'm almost certain, after you snap those eardrums, that many more reasons in favor of what you did will make themselves apparent. It's only matter of time that I'll take my writing serious enough to follow through on it, that soon I'll be deaf, too. Till then, I do hope you consider and weigh the facts.

DAVE GOMEZ'S TIPS FOR FIRST TIME RECORDING

Recording, despite what some artists will tell you, is not the most pleasurable experience in the world. There is nothing worse than leaving the studio, drained of your soul and your rent money, with a tape that sounds like shit. I know, because I've come home with a lot of them. But, like most things, the horrors of recording can be avoided. Although I believe experience is still the best teacher, it's not always the cheapest. Following a few guidelines will help you avoid a disaster in the studio.

1) Be ready

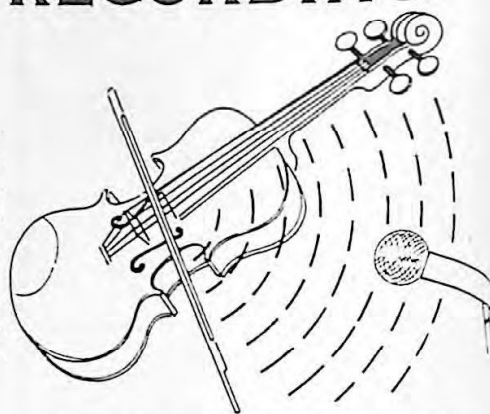
It may seem obvious, but to most bands, it isn't. Most people believe some miracle happens in the studio so that they don't need to practice guitar parts, drum fills, bass lines, or even write lyrics. Record only the songs you are the tightest on, especially if you are just making a tape to get bookings and/or label interest. Those people only want to hear a few songs anyway, so why create a project of epic proportions? Remember, if you suck as a band, you're going to suck in the studio as well.

2) Choose your studio wisely

Most people think that if a studio is real expensive and huge, it must be good. Wrong. You must find a studio that suits your needs. Plenty of bands don't need 24 tracks, or multieffects, so why pay for them? You could save a good ten to fifteen dollars an hour, and the embarrassment of sounding like Bon Jovi. At the other extreme, don't choose a studio just because it's cheap, because it may not provide things that are crucial to your sound. I once used a studio that was only ten bucks an hour, but it had a cheap delay posing as a reverb unit that made everything sound doubled. Also, this place couldn't overdub backing vocals without being unnoticeable or overbearing. A good studio should be able to adapt to any band, instead of the other way around.

3) The engineer

This is very important. If the engineer is used to recording bands as clean as ECM style New Age Jazz, and you want to sound like the Dwarves, there might be a conflict of interest. A good engineer must be patient, a good listener, and easy to get along with. Therefore, if you have a friend who is a recording engineer and into your



shit, use him or her! They'll understand your gibberish much better than some anonymous paid employee. Make sure, no matter how cool the person seems, that he or she knows their way around the studio they are in. That way they won't be stopping every five minutes to figure something out. This is why I prefer to work in an engineer's home studio. Be honest with your engineer. Tell him or her what you want. If you are a hard fast punk band, say so. This will help them help you find the sound you are looking for. It's good to take in constructive criticism, but never let the engineer take over the session.

4) Material

Shop around for tape. If you look in the Yellow Pages, you can find several places that sell recording tape cheaper than most corporate owned music stores. Remember that you need multi-track tape of the correct size and number of channels, as well as analog or digital tape to mix down to. Check with both your recording studio and your pressing plant for what they require. The amount required varies, depending on tape width and the number of tracks. You do need to have a rough idea of how many minutes of music you'll be recording. Never buy it from the studio because they will hike up the price and you will be at their mercy. Be well stocked; have plenty of strings, batteries, cables, picks, etc.

Finally, believe in yourself. This is your project, and the final product will depend on your vision, time, and energy, not anyone else's.

(Bob Lee says: if it's your first time in the studio, don't pay more than \$30/hour, because it's a learning experience. Unless you have a \$10,000 budget)

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Broemer.

Biff Sanders and

M
motiv communications

photo: Don Lewis



Located in a large loft above a taxi dance room downtown, Motiv Studios is filled with expensive equipment, colorful wall hangings, and the scent of clove cigarettes. This is where you'll find Biff Sanders, who has been recording Los Angeles area bands since 1985. He's also the drummer in Ethyl Meatplow and was formerly in Fourwaycross. This turned out to be a very long interview, mainly because Biff was patient and I had a LOT of questions. So we split the text into two parts—what you see below is a discussion of his background, recording history, and his recent move into MIDI technology. Next issue will be a broad overview of the recording process, from soundwaves to magnetic tape, including explanations of the various effects and machines.

How did you get into this? Did you have any training?

In high school I was playing drums and nobody ever knew how to hook anything up, and I was into it. I was into recording my band in my garage with a cassette deck type thing trying to get the best sound and... it started there and just kept going.

Did you make the investment all at once?

No, not all at once. When I was 21, I bought a nice stereo and this really good cassette deck, and a friend of mine lent me his cassette deck that was equally really good, and I had a mixing board that I'd "acquired" from high school. I started trying to do this thing where me and my friend would record ourselves on one cassette and then we would listen back to the cassette and play it into a mixing board and we would play along with the cassette. We would make a new tape that was recording us and we would be recording this music going onto that tape plus us playing along with it. It was kind of like an overdub, but it was instantly being mixed down to one cassette. And then we could even take that tape that we had just done with four of us and do it back again to the other tape. So that's kind of how I started doing it. And then I just slowly got one thing after another, a limiter, I bought this 8 track in '84 or '5...

Did you ever have any formal training?

Not really, not at all. I took a half a semester Long Beach City College because they had a good recording thing there that was cheap. But I couldn't really move up in the classes without going through all the beginners' classes, so I dropped out because I wasn't patient enough to drive down there and go through the ropes.

What would you say that a band should look for? How would a band know what's a good studio, how can they tell if it's a good room, how can they tell if it's a good board?

Generally a studio is only as good as its engineer. And if you have a good engineer and all he has is a cassette deck or two, sometimes he can do better than an engineer that's not very good that has a space shuttle launching facility. The story on that is that generally you want to hear something that that engineer's recorded. And then, as far as the facilities, even with a small eight track or sixteen track studio, you want to make sure they've got mikes that are decent and maybe at least one really good mike for doing vocals or overdubs for guitars and things. Every studio's going to have at least one that's their most expensive mike, even if it's 100 bucks and all the rest are \$10 mikes. I've always had people say, "It's only as good as the engineer," but then say, "The engineer's only as good as his microphones." That's really true because microphones are where the sound starts when you're recording acoustic music. And when I say acoustic music, I mean like rock'n'roll bands, not electronic music, because you've got to use mikes.

What kinds do you use?

Well, AKG is probably the most important that I use, companywise. AKG and Shure and Audio Technica and Electrovoice. The AKG 414 mike is the one that I have used for years and it's a very expensive mike—it's probably close to \$1,000 now. The main thing for me is that it's versatile, so it's not like I'm buying a really expensive mike that's only going to be able to record vocals. I can record anything with it and hopefully if you're spending that much money on a mike, you can record anything with it. It's not

going to be limited in its capabilities or its parameters. But then for recording drums and sometimes bass guitar and things, you don't need to have a \$1,000 mike necessarily. That's why I say generally you need one really good mike in a studio for doing your vocals and your overdubs and things, but the rest of the mikes can be just good, functional mikes to do drums and whatnot.

The other thing with a basic studio is having some kind of compressors or limiters because that is going to enable them to get a good print, and they're going to be able to take that sound and control it a little and put it down on tape for you. So compression is important in a studio even if it's just one or two compressors. The tape machine, generally you want to know how old the tape machine is that they're using, or how old the heads are, because head wear, just like on your own cassette deck at home, can be significant. It can be a big machine that looks incredible, looks like a washer-dryer, you know, and the tape head on it is ancient and so the sound that it records is lousy. So that's always a good question is to know how old the heads are or how old the machine is itself.

As far as the room goes—god, that's really hard to say sometimes with any particular rules. I've seen people record in everything from their bathroom to their backyard. But generally, you want a room ideally that has a sort of a high ceiling, because if you're going to record drums you want to have the drums be able to breathe a little bit. The drums, if they're too cramped in, they're going to sound really dead and really dry and they're not going to reverberate on themselves. You want a drum to, since it's an acoustic instrument, be able to breathe and react to the wood or whatever it is that's around it, so sometimes recording drums on a wood floor can be good because it'll sound really healthy. Or at least with a room that's large and has a high ceiling.

Would you think that some engineers are better at certain kinds of music than other engineers? I mean, When they come here should they think, oh, Biff's in an electronic dance band, so you wouldn't be able to do an acoustic band? I mean, not just you specifically, but how can you tell?

I think most definitely in a certain respect but sometimes engineers or even producers will be doing something today that is totally different from where they started. People say "what kinds of bands have you recorded?" And I've recorded everything from performance art and spoken word and acting and weird stuff to some insane music and machinery, so I think there's some engineers that probably wouldn't put up with what I've put up with. (Laughing)

Really?

Or would have a bad attitude about it and those artists wouldn't come back. You need patience in an engineer. It's a service industry. And you've got to be patient. You've got to be able to explain to people what's going on but you also have to be able to understand what they want to do. So them being able to communicate to you what they want is important and you being willing to try to understand what they're saying.

Like a hairdresser.

Yeah. It's weird, and when you're recording vocalists you feel like a dentist almost. (Laughs.) It's like pulling teeth, in a physical sense, because you can hear every crackle in their voice or whatever. And at the same time it's very personal and you really want to work with them to get what it is that's really good. If you can get something that's really good for people and it's even better than they expected, then they're going to be extremely happy. I started my studio because I couldn't find that serenity. I would go to studios and I would try to get what I wanted and they would have their idea of what it should be and I didn't really know how to manifest what it was in my head. It just didn't work out and so I started recording my own stuff on my own. I was very disenchanted, so I started doing my own thing and self-teaching myself too.

Which is more frustrating for engineers—somebody who comes in and has never recorded before and doesn't really know what to do and they just are totally like, "Help me, help me," or someone comes in and—I have friends who have recorded before and they just want an engineer who will just do what they say. For example they want drums mixed a certain way and they're always having a conflict because the engineer doesn't want to do it.

Well, there's always a trade off there. I've been through it myself in the same situation. You want to tell people, "Well I know best", you know, that kind of thing. "I've been through this before". And that's hard, although sometimes there's some validity in saying that, to someone who's maybe not been in a studio that often, or maybe has been but never done this particular thing or tried to get this particular bitchin' other sound. Sometimes there's some openmindedness on both sides but that's a real difficult situation. The thing that haunts me is, you say you want someone to have complete freedom. You say, "Okay, I'm just going to do it the way you're saying," to the artist—but you don't want it to come back and haunt you in mixdown or later, when all of a sudden you can't hear that instrument the way you want to hear it. They're saying, "Well, why not?" and you're saying, "Well, because you made me record it this way." And if we had just done it with a little bit more of this or that, then we'd be able to hear it better. When someone is wanting something a particular way, I try to make sure that they are saying that with a broad picture in mind, and that they're not just like isolating themselves on that particular sound. Because you can get a bitchin' bass guitar sound but if it doesn't fit with the rest of the band then it's not going to work no matter how bitchin' it sounds. The hard thing is, it's like a big jigsaw puzzle when you put a whole bunch of music together. That's the hardest and most undefinable part of it. The good thing is to have an ear for it and put it together. There's always going to be an engineer's signature on it. Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on the engineer. The big thing is, it is total.

You've got to have a broad picture in mind.

The other thing is that when bands come in and do their initial track or do a long day of work, it's good to take a cassette tape of it home and listen to it on their own stereo and really dig hard and say, "Well, it's too bass-y or it's just too bright or it's too this or too that," if it's not sounding the way they want it. Of course, then the engineer will have all sorts of excuses. Dealing with bands that have never recorded before at all is always a real challenge because, not having been in the studio they're not going to be ready for some of the difficulties, like wearing headphones while playing. They don't want to do that, it's hard for them but in the end they hopefully will realize that it's going to make their lives easier and so they'll get accustomed to it. You have to get the headphones mixed and sounding comfortable enough so that maybe they're going to do what they do best. The other big thing that got me started in my work doing my own studio was—and it's always a big thing—is having headphones that are good. You want to check to see that a studio will give you a good headphone mix and have a good headphone playback system because that is what you're going to be using to do your music. You're listening to yourself with those headphones, when you're doing your part. That's so important because if it doesn't sound right or it doesn't feel comfortable then you're not going to sing very well, and that's so important, so get that engineer to get it the way you explain it, get it comfortable, the way you want it.

What is a real common mistake that people make when they come in for the first time?

Somebody has to have that bigger picture in mind, at least somebody in the band having an idea of the final product. Or somebody in the band hopefully with an understanding of what's going on. Everybody doesn't have to be educated in it but somebody who's going to understand that there's multitrack, etc. They can maybe do things that they never thought they could do. Because a lot of times bands will want it just the way it is when they do it at home and that's cool, but when you go into the studio, your sound is almost always going to get sterilized to a certain extent. So you're going to have to compensate for that and the way you compensate is to do extra stuff. It sounds overindulgent and you think, "Oh, we don't need a tambourine," and "We don't need this other overdub". Well, in the studio, go ahead and do it because you're going to need some of that extra stuff maybe in the end to get that extra energy that you would, say, have live. You want that energy on tape and you may not be able to get it by just sheer volume or sheer yelling. So you're going to want to put those things in there that are going to make it sound louder or fuller to try and compensate. A lot of times in the studio, as best you can without going overboard, try to throw a lot of things down on tape in the amount of time you've got, because the more stuff you've got to work with the better in the end. You can always edit that stuff down when you mix it. Generally it's good to have people overplay a little bit. Not a ton, but just overplay so you've got stuff to work with. A few extra vocal tracks even though you're not used to it or... I try to get people to do that because you're going to need more.

Do most of the people that come here to record have a producer with them or do they usually just have you? You wouldn't say "I produced someone's record," or would you?

Most people don't bring a producer because they can't afford it or they just don't have one. Once in a while, but as

a rule not, because about half the time they do demos. I like to work with a producer. For me it's great to have the band have a producer because then I feel safe in what I'm doing. I'm not going to be the one to blame! Because I'm physically doing the knob turning, but the producer is the one that's working with the band on that communication and trying to put that puzzle together, that big picture. So I'm not going to be worrying about the big picture for them. When they don't have a producer, instinctively I'm going to slide into some of that, because I want whatever it is that I'm recording to sound good. So I'm going to be playing producer, but there'll be a line there. Just in terms of commitment and money and time and trouble, you can only go so far. If someone says "I want you to produce it", then obviously you're going to put a lot more into it. In terms of engineering, things aren't going to change. I'm going to do things the same but if the singer's being loud or the guitar solo sounds like Lynyrd Skynyrd or something, I'm going to tell them. If I'm being the producer, I'm going to say, "Well, are you sure about that vibe?". As an engineer, I'll do that a little bit, but I'm going to let them decide if it's what they want unless they ask me, just because of the time and trouble and involvement. It's great to have a band have a producer, though. It's always kind of good. I think a lot of bands, not all, but a lot of bands wish they could have a good producer but that's hard to find. It's like finding a good manager. Where are they?

Do you want to say something about the conditions for recording electronic music?

Well, you can go to some studios to do electronic music and they do it almost exclusively. There's home studios where they don't even own a microphone. In L.A. and all over the place there are people that do their own recording. They record their keyboard and their drum machine, all that stuff, and play it onto their four track or their eight track. There's lots of engineering in your electronic music but it's more MIDI programming and the time code sync, but it's still the same kind of stuff. You can make the bass phasier and equalization and all that. You don't have to do that quite as heavily because the sounds are electronic and they're already processed a little bit. The strings aren't vibrating on the bass, because it's a bass sample, so you don't have those glitches. Those glitches that'll come out really nice sometimes. For me, recording electronic music after having recorded regular—"regular," (laughs)—acoustic and rock'n'roll and all that for so many years is that—and having avoided electronic music for years—is that when I do electronic music, I try to do it with some life to it. Sometimes it can be extremely sterile. So I'm like trying to record electronic music and produce it and engineer it so that it sounds real to a certain extent. That's important unless you want to be distractingly mechanical like Kraftwerk. There's a lot of MIDI programming involved in engineering electronic music because you've got MIDI keyboards, you've got many things, and I avoided that for years and eventually realized that it had developed to a point where it's simple. I got into it, and it was not as complicated as I thought it was. It's set up for stupid musicians. You can deal with it.

So now you like that because it's a different set of challenges?

Yeah, this is something new to do. I started doing it with John (Napier) a couple of years ago when we started our band (Ethyl Meatplow). It wasn't as intimidating or as mechanical in some ways as I thought, because machines

Biff Sanders continued

are screwy too, like people. For one thing, you're realizing that all that MIDI stuff is not as complicated as it needs to be, or you don't need to be a rocket scientist. It's sometimes a relief to know, because then you feel like, okay, I can do this. It's just something new to do. Years ago I had to turn people away because they said, "Do you have MIDI capability at your studio?" and I said, "No," and now I don't have to say no. I can bring bands in and record them and do that, but I can also bring in a solo artist who just has a keyboard and do the whole nine yards with him as well. That's more clientele; that's the main reason there.

With my own music, I don't know, it's kind of an evolution, not really any conscious thing. I can't say I'm really in love with drum machines and stuff. They're just a tool. There's some of them that have made life simpler. Not simpler in the sense of physically playing, or physically playing your instrument, because I think that's something that's almost going away these days, but simpler in terms of getting your ideas written sooner, or getting that creativity stuff happening faster sometimes. I don't see myself as such a techno-music engineer necessarily. Not really.

Can you list some of the people that you've recorded?

My first EP was with Savage Republic, for Play It Again Sam in '86? All of Fourwaycross' albums. I did early Drowning Pool, Shiva Burlesque. Sandy Duncan's Eye, the D.I.'s. I did the last Chris D. album a couple of years ago. Stereotaxic Device, Distorted Pony, Geko, a lot of the Psychotechnics people. Bands like Steaming Coil, Blinded Out Fatalists a few years back. All different kinds of stuff. Marnie Weber's stuff. The ones I produced were like Marnie Weber and Stereotaxic. I coproduced a lot of the good people. I always draw a blank when I start naming lots of names. I have a list somewhere...

How about when someone else is producing a band that you're in? When Geza X (who produced Josie Cotton, X, Dead Kennedys, Celebrity Skin) produced that one track on the Ethyl Meatplow record. Was that better or worse?

It was much better.

Oh really?

Yeah, I talk to Geza every day now. (Laughs) He's really good. I'm kind of like where he was maybe three or four years ago. He's like the father figure now. (Laughs.) It was great to meet him because he's not somebody way up high on a pedestal. I could relate to him. And he's a pretty good engineer. I think a good producer is—generally the best kind of producer is going to be one that plays an instrument of some sort. A good producer as a rule probably has some previous musical involvement, but also I think a better producer is the one who knows how to do some engineering. They don't have to, but it certainly is an advantage because they know exactly how to get a particular sound that they're talking about.

Do you ask bands to bring in tapes? What if someone comes in who you've never heard of before?

Yeah, they bring in a tape hopefully. Or I ask them for one. Sometimes... on that note, that's real important. If they don't have that, bring a tape of their favorite band that has the sounds they like. Maybe the music doesn't have much in common with theirs, but at least they like that guitar

Continued on page 79

MIDI LIFE CRISIS

BY ALAN ANDERSON

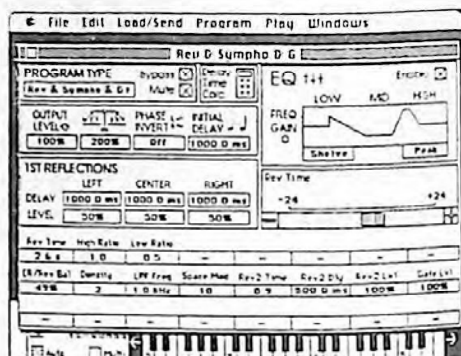
MIDI (pronounced mid-E, not my-die) is the acronym for Musical Instrument Digital Interface, a protocol that was originally designed to enable synthesizers of different makes to communicate with one another and share information. Coupling synthesizers with personal computers through MIDI has rendered an extremely impressive technology—one which places veritable orchestras at the fingertips of the user. It is difficult to overstate the extent to which MIDI has effected the production of music since its inception less than a decade ago.

Let's examine the nuts and bolts of MIDI to get an understanding of how it works and what feats are possible with this technological wizardry. MIDI is a system through which synthesizers and computers can exchange and record information describing a musical event; MIDI does not relay actual sounds. A MIDI signal carries information defining such characteristics as which note was played, how hard the note was struck, and how long the note was sustained. If a keyboardist plays a musical passage on a synth and feeds it to a computer via MIDI, the computer will record the parameters of the performance. In this dynamic, the computer functions like a tape recorder, except that playback of the MIDI information by itself is meaningless. In order to hear the performance played back, the MIDI signal must be fed back to the synth. Upon playback, the relationship of the computer to the synth is similar to that of a piano roll in a player piano. However, this piano roll is prompting a piano that can sound like any instrument the musician desires.

The synthesizer, as it stands today, is a bit like a space-age kazoo. By manipulating the keys of a keyboard, one is able to mimic—quite convincingly—the sound of practically any instrument. Through various kinds of sound manipulation, such as digital sampling, synthesizers are able to emulate the timbre and color of authentic instruments. These instrument "voices", referred to as "virtual instruments", are encoded on microchips which make up the brain of the synthesizer, a component known as the tone generator. A synth receiving the MIDI piano roll signal can sound like a flute, a violin, or a pipe organ; a car horn, a clanking pipe, or a choir of angels. In short, the MIDI signal can be rendered as any sound that has been captured and made a voice of the tone generator.

But wait...there's more. Due to capabilities known as "multi-timbral" and "polyphonic", most synths are capable of rendering more than one virtual instrument and more than one note at a time. Computers, for their part, are capable of triggering these different voices by functioning as more than one piano roll at a time. Voilà, a desktop orchestra! An orchestra that is completely flexible: as many or as few instruments as desired, instrument voices changed in an instant, keys transposed at will, melodies graphically rewritten, notes deleted, entire passages cut and pasted!

In the hands of the musically adept, such a system offers unmatched creative freedom by providing a forum in which a multiplicity of ideas can be explored quickly with a minimum of fuss. However, as with most dazzling, new technologies, the whistles and bells—the seeming magic of it all—can leave one stranded in a web of possibility, undisciplined by purpose. MIDI is a tool, and like all tools it is not inherently good or bad, it is simply a means of facilitating a task. If a craftsman is inept, it doesn't matter what tools are used, the work will be shoddy.



MIDI is indeed a powerful tool, one which has in fact redefined the way in which music is made in our time. As MIDI expands, people square off as ally or rival to the technology. But it is difficult to assess MIDI in the absolute terms of good and bad, since the debate is predicated on a whole series of ideologies and assumptions about art and value and authenticity and talent. What has MIDI really changed? Music itself—as an idea—has not changed. It is still about tone and meter and rhythm. The interface with musical ideas and the accessibility to the tools used in the creation of music has been re-oriented. Some argue that MIDI has rendered music-making too much of a process and left it not much of an art. MIDI may render the process of making music easier by providing a more direct line of expression from the realm of thought to the realm of execution, but this could be advantageous. We are talking about cultural production. We are talking about providing access to the tools of musical expression to those who do not possess formal training, yet possess the intellectual and emotional impulse to communicate musically. In a populist framework, we are talking about technology tearing down the ivory tower of elite aesthetes. We are talking about putting the power of music making into the hands of the *Everyman*. (I am speaking aesthetically, not economically. The price tag for the basic hardware puts us back in the realm of the privileged.)

MIDI has redefined the material production of music. The threat, I suppose, is that we are talking about re-orienting the marketplace around musical production. We are undercutting the commodification of music, by rendering technique obsolete and de-fetishizing talent—talent as defined by technical prowess or manual dexterity associated with playing an instrument. With the aid of MIDI, the composer is able to construct a musical passage that far exceeds his technical abilities as an instrument player. Musician purists condemn MIDI for its artificiality. They despise the synthesizer that robs the instrumentalist of his art and his livelihood. They dread the future in which the existential relationship between the sound and the instrument that makes the sound is severed. They prophesize that one day no one will associate the sound *violin* with the actual physical acoustic instrument, but rather with an algorithmic function, a waveform, or merely a program number on the LCD front panel display of some keyboard. Purists deny the validity of the synthesized instrument because of its lack of authenticity, and this is not without merit. A synthesized voice is always the same voice, identical from note to note, from occasion to occasion, and from machine to machine.

It may finally come down to arguments over technology, art, and their complicated relation to human expression. MIDI is a system of representation, and, as such, is both a descriptive language and a medium with expressive characteristics that it lends to the events it describes. MIDI doesn't change music, but it does redefine the way people make music—in truly profound ways. Truly.

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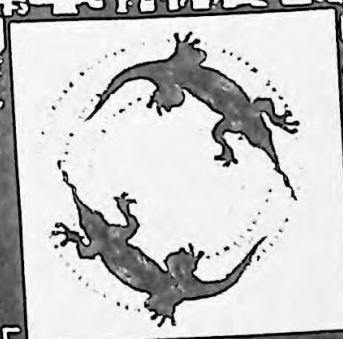


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NEMESIS RECORDS

Robert Hammer and Surrogate Spike

Although I've known Robert Hammer for a while through his band Distorted Pony, it wasn't until I began working on this section that I discovered he also ran a studio out of the "Pony Palace", a large house where four out of five Ponies live. The studio is basically in the dining room, and it has a personal, garagey feel because there is no separation between the engineer and the band. Robert, Evan Mack, and myself all sat down to talk in this comfortable atmosphere. —Mikki

So, do you want to explain how you got into this and did you take any classes?

No classes, no formal training at all. In college I worked at KXLU and they had this production room and I decided to try to teach myself, but it didn't really work and then I finally just started asking questions. I knew some recording arts majors and sat in on their sessions. Then I went to the library and got some books and read some stuff, thinking I could learn something and most of it is either like ultratechnical acoustical engineering with all sorts of formulas and the rest is like very artsy kind of far out. It's all "do what you want and figure out what works best".

After a year of like really brain wracking, completely inane information, I just started doing it. Up at the station on Brain Cookies, I did engineering there for a couple of months when Justin Time wasn't there. So I did like three bands in three hours in that kind of situation, a live thing.

That wasn't recording, though, that was like...

That was, yeah, that was live broadcasting, mixing tracks for broadcasting instead of putting it to tape. I worked all this time during the summer as a civil engineer and during school as a TA or whatever and I had all sorts of money saved after 4 1/2 years and decided to treat myself to large amounts of equipment and made the full commitment to recording, mostly just for the band. I was in Distorted Pony by then and wanted a place to record. I had this big theory of, like a big enterprise, like having a band and being able to do your own recordings and then getting the master and putting them out by yourself. It was kind of a punk rock idea to do it yourself. At the time I didn't really know Motiv or anything, and actually, except Motiv there isn't really anything, that was reasonably priced or had an engineer that had the concept of the music you're trying to do. Most of them are doing jingles during the day and then there's some, maybe top 40 cover band going in there at night. When it comes to alternative music the guys are pretty clueless and you just get kind of lame recordings and I decided to do it ourselves, it'd be perfect. Course it didn't end up that way, there were some pretty shitty recordings in the beginning, but after four years I think I'm



photo by Nina

good enough to have people come in and pay me to do it.

Are you trying to reproduce the live sound?

We try to reproduce a space, a feel, and a good sound. We can tape something that doesn't essentially sound good but we can actually change the sound completely; take an initial sound, a drum or trumpet and change everything, including how long it is, how big the sound is, to actually the tone, the feel of the whole sound. Instead of having a drum sitting in a small room, we can get a big room or we can actually make a drum sound completely different, like a freight train or just a momentary spurt of static or something. It all depends on how you use it and to what degree you want to use it and how faithful you are to reproducing accurately the recording. It all depends on the band. Most of the bands I do are looking for size and the bigness of the sound.

Do you have problems with people coming in and having trouble conveying to you what they want?

Yeah, that's the biggest problem, that people don't understand—they have a thought in their head, and they want something to end up a certain way, but they can't communicate what that is in their head to me to get the band, their tape, to sound the way they want it to. Maybe they're explaining it correctly but I'm just interpreting it wrong. And I know how to do things a certain way and there's certain things I like to do, so my influence is going to be in there, and then the equipment you have is certainly a definite factor in how it's going to sound. But there is a big communication problem. Some people are really clueless about what I have or what you're able to do with certain things so they can't say, "Take a delay and set it at this." They say, "Well, I want something to happen here and then happen again, like, real fast afterwards." And that kind of leaves it open, when you get explanations like that. And a lot of times I set a mix and I'll say, "Does that sound good?" and they'll say, "Yeah, it's sounds all right." And they say that just because it sounds good, but it doesn't sound the way they wanted it to. Sometimes if I feel like making an effort I'll start asking them, "Well, what's wrong with it;

what about this?" and I'll start saying "Well, I don't have to have this sound like this; I can do this and I can do this." But if it's a big communication problem, if I feel like being tired and lazy, I'll say, "Whatever". Yeah. It all depends on how much trouble they give me.

(Evan) Aren't you also sometimes acting as a producer, too, of sorts?

It's inherent in my job cause I'm actually having my hands on the knobs and stuff, but I don't sit there and say, "What about this?" and try to think of real artistic and interesting things to do with the effects or

cutting out channels or dropping this or adding this. I put myself in an engineer position. I put the stuff onto the tape and I'm not there making decisions about how they should write their songs... I don't tell them, "Well, you know, maybe you should do a guitar overdub" or something like that; I don't do a big producer part of it, and sometimes people who don't know their way around a studio need that and I'm not going to give them that. So when they get a tape here it's not highly produced because I'm just sitting there engineering. I'm not a big producer. I've recorded with Biff (Sanders), and he did a little bit of producing and it helped, and he had some fine suggestions, but me sitting here for another band, unless I know them, I might say something, but otherwise it's just me getting a good mix right away and if they want something different I'll do it for them, I'll work with them, but they have to do the production, I'm not going to compromise that. I think that has to do with experience. I haven't been doing this with bands other than my own for a very long time and I might feel uncomfortable doing it, or I just don't think it's my job.

So how do people find you?

Word of mouth. Just friends.

(Evan) It keeps you busy though, doesn't it?

Yeah, it keeps me way busy. It's kind of tough to do a full time job and then get home and maintain the studio, and then every weekend have somebody in. I live with three other people so I have to kick them out every time a band comes in to record. It becomes a pain. I try to record Fridays, when I have it off from work and Saturdays. Sundays I leave open for Distorted Pony stuff.

Do you want the recording thing to take over more and eventually get rid of your day job?

No, that's not in the plans right now. My day job brings in a big paycheck. I don't see the income coming from the studio just yet. I want money.

(Evan) And there's no job security.

Yeah, exactly. If I ever get to a point where I have everything I want and need, maybe that would be a nice thing. Also I would like to have a different space. The space right

ROBERT HAMMER CONTINUED

now is a half space, it's not ideally suited for a recording studio. I wouldn't mind finding something else more suited to being a recording studio. That's a nice thought, get up in the morning, do recording rather than get up in the morning and do what I do now.

Do people come in and do demos more, or releases?

Mostly it's been Slug doing the actual releases. Their single was done here. Their Sympathy for the Record Industry single. Their next release is gonna be a 10" which is going to be partly recorded here and partly recorded at LMU by a guy named Colin Bogart. I don't know if they're going to use his mixes, but I think they're going to use his tapes and maybe get it remixed by somebody else, not here, onto a 4 track. I did the Stuart Pauline "Heartsong" EP, which should be out eventually. I've done demos for about five or seven bands.

Do you want to list people, bands you've recorded?

Slug, Gravity Throttle, Death Ride 69, and Linda LeSabre and her Exotic Drums and I've done a band named Sushi, it was a friend of a friend kind of thing. Who else have I done? Distorted Pony, Daisy Flux, Ether... Jackknife I recorded here, that single, wait, that wasn't recorded here, but I did the original Jackknife before they broke up (*this is a joke*). What else did I do?

Do you keep copies of everything?

Usually I keep the multitrack copies because nobody else can do anything with them, and then a lot of the DAT things stay too, because people can't do anything with them once they're done. Like Slug just mastered the record and then gave it back to me. And if they ever want like master cassette copies they just call me up or come over and we do it real quick. I've had a bunch of other people, Dan from Babyland asked me about my scheduling, Popdefect asked me about my scheduling, Sam from Mindgod has asked me, those people... (*pointing at Evan, whose band Oiler subsequently recorded at Surrogate Spike*)

Could you do Babyland here—do you have MIDI stuff?

I don't—they just bring in all their MIDI stuff. They have to set up all the computers and whatnot, give me all the output and then I would mix them, do the vocal overdub.

Have you done it before?

Yeah, Gravity Throttle had all this special stuff on computer so they brought this thing up but I'm not MIDI equipped. I don't have a computer, I don't have the software. I have a drum machine. I also have a sampler.

Do you make an effort to find out what they are like beforehand?

Yeah, I totally try to make an effort. Usually I've been pretty lucky. I've done one band that I'd never heard of before. It was like a total client/engineer type of relationship, and that was pretty weird, because most people that come in here are people I know and have talked to before. Ether was a band that Jack from Fourwaycross did, so I actually made an effort and went and saw them. I don't want to get stuck with some cheeseball, I hate to say "unimportant music", but I don't want to do unimportant music. I want to document music that is worthwhile.

It's interesting, that you look at the documentary aspect of it, because it is, it's storage. As a sound, and then as a social phenomenon, that these are people that you are friends with.

Yeah. That's what makes it worth it, not sitting here with some cock rock band that's going to be shipping the tape

off to MCA to try to get a record deal. That's not what I'm looking for. I'd rather find a real cool band that I think people should be able to hear, and get them recorded, for a reasonable cheap price, and get a product out that you can buy, that people can listen to. That's another thing, recording costs are really really outrageous, probably because people are trying to make their living. I mean, Biff charges more than me, he has to, that's his job. He has overhead, when he buys new equipment or replaces old equipment it comes from the money that you give him when you record with him. I'm completely different that way. I have another income. It's a completely different situation. (*Robert begins to get very emotional here*) "My angst, by Robert Hammer" I just feel bad because I'm doing a recording studio and I'm charging outrageously low prices so these bands come in here, and Biff is out there trying to struggle and make a living off this and, understandably, charging more. I feel bad about that, I really do. I mean, before I got the 16 track it was no big deal, he was a 16 track guy and I was an 8 track guy, no problem. Now every time I see him I ask him how business is and make sure he looks healthy, like he's eating.

Has your equipment changed a lot from the original investment?

Just more of it. The original investment was the mixing board and a tape machine. Then I slowly added outboard stuff, DBX to the 8 track, and then within the last two months I got the 16 track.

Do you want talk about your equipment?

I have a studio master board, 16 channel, 8 subgroups. I have an 8 track, Tascam 38 with DBX. I also have a Tascam MSR16, 16 track. I mix down to DAT, which is a Panasonic SV3700. I have a cassette player so I can make dubs for people, better than a standard at home dub. I use Tannoy PBM6.5 near field monitors. And then in terms of outboard I use a BBE sonic maximizer, like a phase correction, for the mixdown.

What does that do?

When you dub. In terms of all your screwing around, putting the sounds together and putting them through effects and doing all your EQing and stuff. The phase, and time alignment, so all the signals don't match up and what that does is put everything else in correct time so it sounds clear; you can hear all the highs and the lows and stuff like that. It helps clean it up a lot. When you're using the format I'm using, 16 track on 1/2 inch, sound quality isn't up there compared to, say, 16 track, one inch machine, and the board I'm using isn't exactly the cleanest thing.

When you say it's not clean, you mean there is a noise?

There's a noise there. You turn on all the channels and push up all the faders, and turn the master volume up high and you'll hear noise. And if you go into some big Hollywood studio with a larger board or something, it's not as loud. In terms of electronics, the way they set things up and do things that made it quiet, it's cost prohibitive to try and stop the noise. So that helps (the maximizer). Some people find out that they really like it, they don't really care either way it comes out. It's kind of funny, it's a personal thing. Anyway, and then I have compression limiters. I use a Yamaha and an Audiologic. I have a Yamaha multi-effects, not SPX90, like everybody else has, but I have a GBP50, which is a guitar effect which has all of the SPX90 sound plus distortion and then I have Digitech reverbs and delay, multi-effects, and that's the studio itself. And then there's amps here and stuff like that if people want to use or need to use them.

Did you say microphones?

Yeah, I got microphones, too. I've got plenty of them. I use

AKG 451, D112, 414, also have a C1000S, also have an EV-RE20 and a 408 and then Shure 57 and 58.

And headphones?

Headphones? Yeah, I use headphones, AKG K240 headphones, but in terms of the monitoring system I don't set up headphones usually except for vocal overdubs. What I try to do, what I like to do, is have the band do it as live as possible. I have the drums in the other room but there's still visual contact between the band and the drummer, so like there's separation between the drums and the amps, and all the amps they have in the same room separated by cushions and stuff. So there's good separation but you still get the total live feel and everybody's playing together, not the studio, sterile sound. If they need monitoring, I'll set up some PA stuff, if somebody can't hear something in that situation. And then for vocal overdub I'll set up headphones. But it's not true to life, it's my house. No big separation between me and the band. They're right there (*pointing a few feet away from his chair*).

(Evan) Where do you put the drummer, in there?

I put the drums over in Tricia's room (Tricia is the bass player in Distorted Pony). Yeah, and then like you have that sliding door so you only get two, three feet of visual. There's like a whole room in there, there's not too much space for the sound to bounce back and forth. The biggest problem I have is actually the drums bleeding onto the amps that sit sort of directly across, like the cymbals and stuff, all the high end stuff that we carry. But that hasn't been a problem that I've noticed. And then usually I just line up all the amps on the opposite wall there and then separate them with our amps. Are you getting all the information you want?

Do you want to explain what all that is? The outboard and the DBX?

The two major noise reduction companies are DBX and Dolby. It's a matter of... consumer electronics usually have Dolby and pro electronics usually have DBX. It's the electronic wizardry that gets more dynamic range and clearer recordings and it's steeped in all sorts of theory, I guess. It has to do with compression and expansion of the signal. What you do is you lower the noise base on the tape, analog tape has inherent noise on it. It's the nature of it. So the mixing board is just the inputs and the outputs for controlling a signal, and the tape machine, 8 track has 8 individual channels to record and mix down to a two track master. I do DAT exclusively for making the final stereo product. Outboard is just reverb, delay, all the effects, these all the other funny things like pitch change and flange and chorus, other dynamic controls like compression, limiting, gating.

How much time does it take to record?

Putting down tracks, it all depends on how fast the band can do it, if they can do it in 50 takes or in one take. Once the band is here, it takes me about an hour to get everything done in terms of drums and mikes and shit. After that it's up to the band, how fast they can do stuff, how well they have their stuff down. It usually takes two to three takes. If you're doing 12 minute songs, that's completely different. Mixing is actually up to the band too. It depends what kind of music you do and how much production you're going to need. If you're going to do a lot of effects, and if there's a lot of instrumentation, a lot of extra doing in the mix, a lot of tricky stuff, backwards stuff or whatever, you might want to do, it takes a long long time. It can take two hours for one song. It's dependent on the band.

Robert and Surrogate Spike can be reached at 213-662-PONY. He charges \$8/hour for 8 track recording, and \$16/hour for 16 track recording. Bring 1/2 inch tape and DAT for mix down.



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THE MUSIC REVIEWS

Sometimes it's hard being considered a music based magazine. We've felt a sort of responsibility to our beloved readers, and the bands, to review almost all the records that come our way. Well, we've been fooling ourselves. We can't review everything that's sent to us, and the type size can't go much smaller, can it? So, here are the reviews. We actually had enough to fill the whole magazine - you'll have to wait for our next issue to see those. From now on we'll be more selective. Of course major label records, as always, go straight to Aron's Recors, do pass go and do collect \$200. P.S. If you're wondering why Krk's record reviews are so much shorter than everyone else's, please remember that he has only just arrived from Flipside and hasn't yet fully immersed himself in our more... metaphoric style. (He still dresses like Dennis Hopper, too, but we don't care).

ALICE DONUT - THE BIGGEST ASS (12" EP)

This isn't really a four song EP, three of the songs are different versions of the AD opus "The Biggest Ass". With off center vocal distortion, trombone riffs, ringing bells, and an emphasis on "Food, sex and cruelty," these title song(s) are deliberate, mesmerizing, and as distracting as their live shows. And, though other recordings may be more representative of the band as complex songwriters and noisy structuralists, here they are playing with a more spatial feel, with lots of layers, repetition, echoes, and overdubs. As your body expands and contracts in response to this aural manipulation, you may find that even three times isn't enough. -Mikki (Alternative Tentacles, P.O. Box 11458, San Francisco, CA 94101)

ANTISEEN - SOUTHERN HOSTILITY (LP)

A punk as fuck, southern style effort from this band out of Jesse Helms' country. Totally raw production that makes some of the early 80's punk records sound like slick Top 40 production. Yet this band's ability to express themselves so eloquently lyricwise really impresses me. Such as, their commentary on religion: "My God can beat up your god, your god can suck on my rod" or perhaps their sensitivity towards fatherhood, (Old man, hit the road!) But the vocalist, Jeff Clayton, really wins me over, sounding like a bastard offspring of a country singer and a lawnmower. North Carolina should be proud. -Dave (Rave Records)

ASHTRAY - TRAILER/RIDING ON THE TRAIN (7")

Oh fuck, fuzzy droned out, minimal pop rock. Emotional and as good as all the hundreds of other records I've heard this week. -Krk (Shoe Records, PO Box 42249, Philadelphia, PA 19101)



ASSASSINS OF GOD - NO MUSIC TONIGHT/PINK SONG (7")

This music is like EST. Groovy cover art (printed on recycled paper). "Pink Song": Intricate Mothers/Zappa inspired jazz-rock with a little Stan Ridgway spice. Sardonic lyrics. "No Music Tonight" has a more angst ridden folksy NoMeansNo/Camper Van Beethoven bend. There are some very subtle, intelligent sarcasms woven in. -Annabelle and Ethan (Promo-clipped by Broken Rekids, PO Box 460402, SF, CA 94146.)

BIGDAMNCRAZYWEIGHT - TIERAS (7")

This New Mexico four piece lays tracks in the territory founded by the likes of The Jesus Lizard and The Bastards, with all the heaviness of those combos and their sense of dramatic breaks, stops, starts and structural tension. Their attentiveness to song dynamics makes BDCW stand out in the pack of third generation noise bands. Even though the growls and grumbles of the singer have a bit of a crust-core feeling to them, it's a subtlety so no bigdamncrazy deal about it. Definitely on my top ten for the year. -Tomas (Resin Records, 2300-B Central SE, Suite 198, Albuquerque, NM 87106)

BIGDAMNCRAZYWEIGHT - TIERAS (7")

Imagine a good Hullahaloo or a bad Iowa Beef Experience. Loud guitars grinding a post punk, industrial rock thing, OK, but not worth getting too excited over. -Krk (Resin)

BIOHAZARD PCB - INFECTIOUS (C)

This band is by far the best of "this week's industrial come-lately oil can banger's". This tape, especially the track "Ingest", will propel Biohazard PCB to techno-dance floor heaven. Though slight influences of other synth bands can be heard, 97% of "Infectious" is refreshing, original sound. Shared vocals, throbbing drum machines, and samples lifted from "Total Recall" lift this band onto my top seven list. -Kerin (PCB Productions)

BLOODHOUND GANG - PLAID CHAMELEON (7")

Young-man-pick-er-self-up-a-guitar-and-play-some-tunes-to-make-the-girls-swoon punk rock from Minneapolis is a la Green Day. An actually enjoyable and not to clichéd three-song EP with "Won't Grab" being the best. This is melodic, catchy rock that becomes bland when heard on good stereo equipment, but on my sister's Fisher-Price, look out! Rumour has it these boys will break up to go to college, in which case higher education will have stolen a potential threat from the new school of hardcore. -Tomas (THD Records, 2020 Seabury Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55406)

BLUE NIMBUS - JADED (LP)

Other reviewers call this band industrial and post-industrial, but it sounds like it was recorded on a 24-track PhoneMale to me. I guess "Jaded" means different things in different states because this sounds more like Peter Murphy at 39.9 RPMs than anything else. Oh, we're so cutting edge out here on The Coast. And so advanced on the idea curve. -Barney Satyr (Chaos Network, 3652 Bedford, Detroit, MI 48224)

BORN AGAINST - NINE PATRIOTIC HYMNS... (LP)

Born Against, one of them dinky few H.C. bands I still go out of my way to hear or see, are back with their debut LP. "Patriotic Hymns", a concrete based departure from previous beatings, is unquestion-



ably Born Against, though basic "progression" has had its way with their B-Flag/Void surge. The majority of these hymns are quite a bit slower, thus becoming more grinding. Even the vocals are extended from barks to growls. Song to song you get the feeling Born Against are no more happy today than they were two years ago - just more driven and determined. Not the manic, hell throttled psychosis of past discs but skin your cat it can, and your parents as well. -Krk (Vermiform, PO Box 1145, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276)

BRICK LAYER CAKE - [5 song EP]

A different direction for Breaking Circus and Rifle Sport member Todd Trainer, who is creating new material (some solo and some with full band) on this new project. Sometimes I can't help hearing a bit of Touch and Go's Slint release of earlier this year in BLC with its slow, plodding variety of rock; heavy and occasionally ballad-like but with more foreboding lyrical content akin to Nick Cave's storytelling. One side is songs with simple guitar instrumentation, while the flip has drums and such. This has moments but sometimes it lapses into mere background music. -Tomas (Touch & Go, PO Box 25520, Chicago, IL 60625)

BULLETS FOR PUSSY - GUN CONTROL (7")

It's pretty surprising that Bullets for Pussy pulled off a couple of fast ones on this live EP. Only the song "Coming Down" is their usual snails on qualudes sound. The others songs sound like they come straight outta Detroit, year 1969. Limited to 600 on vinyl, so if you want it, get it now. -D. Gomez (Orphanage Records, 1702 W. Camelback #315, Phoenix, AZ 85015)

CAPITALIST CASUALTIES - THE ART OF BALLISTICS (7")

Seven big songs from this Santa Rosa punk combo who apparently (from their press release) want to be removed from the whole S.F./East Bay pop punk culture and get down to the punker-than-thou art of lacking suburban-bred credos on politics and life. CC do it as well as any of the Subhumans and early Discharge inspired bands with tunes like "My Dad Kills For The USA" and "System Conservative". I find this to be a worthwhile project of socially conscious hardcore which fans of Profane Existence and Filth will consider essential. Comes with a fold-out lyric sheet and collage book. Good work on

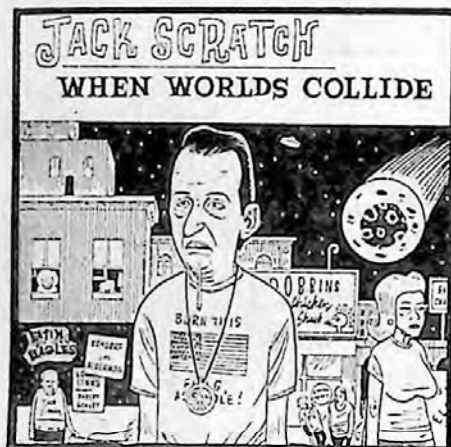
the part of the band, Chris Dodge and their label. —Tomas (Slap A Ham, PO Box 420843, San Francisco, CA 94142-0843)

CHICANO CHRIST — (7" EP)

A hilarious low-ride through the heart of valo-land. Taking massive cues from the Part Time Christians, these Chicanos deliver 11 songs with a heavy emphasis on their bowels. Now just how many bands have you heard claim that "Jesus was a valo?" —Evan (Nemesi)

CRACKERBASH — (7")

Moody, upbeat pop with the rough edges still intact from one of Oregon's most worthwhile bands. These guys are working at it and you will hear more from them. "Holiday" is mildly reminiscent of the Lemonheads and Dinosaur Jr., while "Ballwork" is a loopy miasmic



instrumental that moves like a snake through warm mud. "Walk Back" takes you closer to a neighborhood like Steel Pole Bath Tub's, complete with phone-vocals dialed in from hell. See them live. —Alan (Imp, PO Box 34, Portland, CA 97207)

CRIB — (7")

David Samo plays really beautiful reverb textures and landscapes on solo bass. Very focused and powerful, but too quiet for such a lousy pressing. A D.A.T. or CD release would be more appropriate. "Lick" paints the impression of a sea scape full of seagulls ready to attack. "Bloom" is a surreal journey into a rumbling dungeon of horror. Excellent soundtrack for future evil and violence. —Ethan (Magnatone Records, PO Box 2576, [I lost my wallet in] El Segundo, CA 90245)

CRUST (LP)

The latest offering from the twisted Texas minds behind Crust. A totally varied album. From the keyboard/orchestral brilliance of "They'll Love You For It" to the nerdy coolness of "Diet Tray", it's all here. Hints of Scratch Acid abound along with the use of many vocal treatments culminating in a large round of applause on my behalf. —Evan (Trance/Touch and Go)



Fig 5. Another artificial erection is performed to reveal any leaks in the suture line and to demonstrate a straight penis.

DANA LYNN (C)

I love this band! Ever since I heard the 45 with "Circle", "Pothead", etc., I have been waiting for something new to come out from these guys. This new endeavor is kind of bluesy, with a twangy vocal style and tight time changes. A must—they're good cheese all the way. —Ivy

DELICIOUS MIND GARDEN — DELICIOUS NEW FLAVOR (7")

This is such bad new wave closet rock, I thought it was from Northern California. (like it even fucking matters where it's from). All you need to know is where it's going, nowhere. —Kirk (TBC Records, 1118 Suite JE, Santa Ana, CA 92701)

DISCHARGE — MASSACRE DIVINE (LP)

Back again in 1991 with another attempt at catching the metal market which so often sports their t-shirts. While I might have been able to hang with a 7" of this stuff, an entire album became a burden to bear. Maybe the wasted metal heads of the world will eat this up. Anyway, the saving grace of the package is the noise only instrumental "E# 2.30". —Evan (Clay Records LTD., Twymau House, 31-39 Camden Road, London, NW1 9LF)

DOWN — RIDE THE PINE (7" EP)

Down is really down, as in depressing and mournful. All four songs on the record are equally dejected, making one want to end it all either by taking the record off or by taking an overdose of barbituates. Bridging the gap between early Sonic Youth and Joy Division, with simple dissonant melodies, Down want to make you as sad as they are. The sleeve says something about CB vocals and that is exactly what they sound like. As if the vocalist was 100 miles away singing into a lonely mike to an uncaring ear. —Evan (Bonehead Rex, c/o Scott Sandra, 4746 Northgate, Ann Arbor, MI 48103)

THE DWARVES — THANK HEAVEN FOR LITTLE GIRLS (C)

A completely crazed follow up to "Blood, Guts, and Pussy" featuring the first ever Dwarves love ballad, "Dairy Queen". The other 11 songs all convey the Dwarves short but vicious version of real punk rock. Highlights include "Revenge", with its slide guitar twang, and my favorite from the live shows, "Anybody But Me". Get it. —Evan (SubPop, PO Box 20645, Seattle, WA 98102)

ETHYL MEATPLOW (12")

The ultra minimal red/purple rubber stamped brown chipboard cover (homage to Bruce Licher/L.P.R.?) offers little insight into the genius etched inside the neon blue vinyl. It seems like all three Meatplows add at least a little vocal harmony here and there. The "Love Is Salamander Putty..." A-Side contains two of the band's all time hits: "The Devils' Johnson" is my fave, with Carla's multilingual cussing counterpointing John's satanic channeling. "Birds/Close To You" is a heart warming cover that Karen Carpenter would turn all pink and green for! The "Several Raising Lactating..." side is true to B-Side form; more open and experimental, with a phone call from Michelle (Fuck!) and live Ethyl dancer) permanently archiving the L.A. Underground 1991 Altitude. Anthropologists will be studying this release with awe and terror for centuries. This little disc is most likely just the tip of the Ethyl Sex Bomb to come! Buy now and be there first! —We think this was written by Ethan but he's not really sure. (Piece of Mind, 7325 1/2 Reseda Blvd., CA 91335)

FIFTEEN — SWAIN'S FIRST BIKE RIDE (LP)

Crimpshrine's fans be warned; these former Crimpshriners seem to have more in common with 70's style drippy hippy classic rock than their former band. Normally, I like to see artists from a popular band do something a little different in the new project, but in this case, it seems to be such a conscious effort that it's annoying. For instance, almost every song starts off like an old Crimpshrine hit, then descends into an Elton John tune with a Martin Luther King Jr. speech as lyrics. Only the two beginning tracks on side one and two hold on through the whole song. Those two songs would have made a good single. Check out what Aaron Cometbus has to offer when he releases something. —Dave (Lookout Records, PO Box 11374, Berkeley, CA 94701)

THE FIFTH COLUMN — (7")

This East Coast band should have no trouble being

confused with the other three or so bands with the same name because they're really not as interesting as the others. Boring indie rock and warbling vocals, with no hooks, no power and no feeling in the presentation. There is a lyric booklet and cardboard sleeve for aesthetic sake. Now if only the songs were as good. —Tomas (Clamquake, PO Box 27021, Baltimore, MD 21230)

FIRE IN THE KITCHEN — SIMPLE ENGLISH (7")

College-variety pop with a midwestern feel to it a la Homestead records, Volcano Suns or Big Dipper, only this band is from New York and brought to you courtesy of the mighty Ajax folks, who run an amazing 7" distribution service. Great production and a clean sound make this listenable music with wank guitar solos thrown in, occasionally to no end. This is good in a non-glorious way, so if you're looking to ease off the noise scene for a moment and dig good songwriting, Fire In The Kitchen are for you. —Tomas (Ajax, PO Box 805293, Chicago, IL 60680-4114)

FISH AND ROSES — MONKS HATE YOU/ROBIN HOOD 4 (7")

Quirky NY angst band with 60s orgasm keyboards, wacky guitars, bouzoukis, and all order of weirdness. Minimal drumming, nice edge. Sexy backing vocals. "Robin Hood" reminds me of the noodley intro to Pink Floyd's "Interstellar Overdrive", but this time around the spaceship breaks down before going into gear. Oh well... —Ethan (Friar Tuck Records)



Fig. 344. Paraphimosis in a four-year old boy. The secondary constriction is well shown. Babies Hospital.

FURY RESURRECTION — (7" EP)

Ethan Port left a little note inside this record stating "this sucks big." But I guess he was too chicken to say it in print. —Kirk (THD Records)

GAS HUFFER — FUTURE JANITORS OF AMERICA (LP)

High impact rockin' hick stomp. No shortage of hooks, no shortage of imagination. These guys know what it's about and they're willing to share. Live they're a hoot and a half. This is Gas Huffer's first LP after several 7"s and numerous compilation tracks. Well worth waiting for. Fave cuts include "Nisqually", "Robert" and "Compromise in the Dark". LP includes a hip Huffer comic book. Huff some. —Alan (Empty Records, P.O. Box 12034 Seattle, WA 98102)

GHETTO SCHEIST — KLAUS (C)

Solidly not-bad sludge metal from big fans of SNL's "Sprockets" gag. Hokey, sure, but no worse than any of the "real" tapes I got this month from the likes of Combat and Metal Blade. —Bob Lee (Scheming Intelligentsia, 3025 Plaza, National City, CA 91950)

THE GITS — SECOND SKIN / SOCIAL LOVE (7")

Snappy mid-tempo "punk rock" with thick and meaty production. Singer Mia Zapata has a winning set of pipes that could easily make her one of the more celebrated "I'll darlin'" of the scene. This is one of those rare things — a record for which I would consider dropping a couple of simoleans (or at least borrow and tape). —Michael B. (promo-clipped by Broken Rekids)

GOODFLESH — SLATEMAN/WOUND '91 (7")

Scary, mean sound. More of that "I-got-too-drunk-and-I'm-lost-in-this-death-rock-disco-looking-for-the-bathroom-and-if-I-don't-find-it-soon-I'm-gonna-puke-on-some-16-year-old-bitch's-blue-Doc-Martens" sound. Incomprehensible, incredibly heavy vocals. Great sound



Fig 17. Patient 4 six weeks after placement of a tissue expander, which was inflated to a volume of 1,000 ml.

track music for a meth-amphetamine car crash fantasy. Sounds real serious. Apocalyptic beat with that Teutonic formalist thing going on. You know, kinda constipated. Sort of what I'd imagine music would sound like if made by a GIANT digital watch. —Alan (Sub Pop)

GOLPE JUSTO [7"]

I love surprises like this! Puerto Rican fucking hardcore with a noisy edge to it. All totally political stuff sung in their own language with a lyric sheet translated for American consumers. The recording quality is decent and the sort of low end rattle it has adds to the Do-It-Yourself feeling it carries. "Cuelga El Dictador" and other anti-system songs have a slightly Poison Idea musical approach. A definite item for international punk collectors (especially of the Finnish and South American stuff). —Tomás (Computer Crime, 74 Osbourne Ave., Norwalk CT. 06855)

HULLABALOO — LUBRITORIUM [LP]

Heavy, mean-old beer piss and tobacco spit slab of middle America macho slob-rock. They're mean, they're ugly, and they eat semis for breakfast. Macho Motorhead inspired speed-metal, Sub Pop, TAD, R'n'R mix. What really stands out, aside from their horrible breath, are the interesting background sounds, and the horn section, which drives these otherwise derivative cuts over the top. "Washington's Cock", "Blow Me, Fucking Canada", "Load Star" and "Jah Luv" deserve special attention; sorta like if Tragic Mulatto was composed entirely of 250+ lb. Hell's Angels dudes. —Ethan (C/Z Records, 1407 E. Madison Ave. #41, Seattle, WA 98122)

INSULIN REACTION — SELF GRATIFICATION [7"]

Tracy Lee Skull and Angela Garcia continue to create innovative material with their unique 80's post-punk, alternative style. The Insulin spouses have added Greg Losonsky on psychedelic keyboards and samples, and Joey C. Division on drums. Although I like the addition of a live drummer, their sound has become a little more conventional than the days of their dueling bass, drum machine trademark. The new sound is still haunting, with an eerie Western-Cramps, Pre-Helen Anti-Club alternative feeling. Sincere and beautiful. —Ethan (Amdusias Intl. Records, PO Box 3636, Covina, CA 91722)

JACK SCRATCH — WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE [7"]

Great package. These guys are into 7"s exclusively. This set comes with three of them (sides 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) and a compilation of some of the best underground illustrators, including Dan Close. Great production. Powerhouse drummer, big guitars, fat bass. The only disappointing feature is that Jack Scratch doesn't take a few more chances musically. They tread dangerously close to bar band standard rock and roll riffs. Break some new ground fellas, I know you've got it in you. —Alan (PO Box 146702, Chicago, IL 60614-6702)

KING KONG — OLD MAN ON THE BRIDGE [LP]

King Kong have released some dance inducing singles, no doubt

about that. But on this full length (9 songs) release, any good qualities this band might have displayed drag and come to a complete yawn. The guitar playing, bluesy as it may hint, is the only spark to this dimly lit group of songs. A lot of the downer points go to Ethan Buckler's voice, which is a lame, sleepy and just plain boring mumble. He should stick to playing guitar, because when he's on, he's on, kicking up influences from the Sonics to Link Wray. I'm not sure I'd give the rhythm section as much credit. Not half as good as Girl Trouble so why bother? —Krk (Homestead)

LOVE CHILD — OKAY [LP]

Love Child's sound falls somewhere between the stripped down minimalist and downright silly college pop of Jad Fair or Beat Happening and the usual Homestead records batch of raw mid-west inspired indie rock like the Volcano Suns or Salem 66. I like most of this record for the reckless abandon being displayed by all three of Love Child's members: Alan Licht, Rebecca Odes and Will Baum. Definitely some fresh fish in the water here with the 19 songs (most of them damn hummable) conjuring the memory of creative songwriting genius Daniel Johnston, for example, the songs "Nice Toes" and "Elevator". The three Beatlesque post-love song generation kids meddle melodically through the poison mushrooms of life, plotting a twist around every corner of this record. Lots of tunes, lots of variety, different singers, a not-taking-themselves-too-seriously attitude and rock'n'fundamental sound. This is the tip of the iceberg for future greatness. —Tomás (Promo-clipped by Homestead)

GLEN MEADMORE — BONED [CD]

Eleven sexually influenced good-ole-country boy tunes packed with hooks and fun lyrics like "Take me outside and tan my hide, take me out back and grease my crack." Homophobes will be most offended. Los Angeles should be proud. We're gonna have a lot of good Ben Is Dead square dances with this one. Just like the man himself this is charming. —Darby (Unnecessarily promoclipped by Amoeba Records, 5337 La Cresta Court, LA, CA 90038)

MENACE DEMENT — NANNA/SMALLTOWN [7"]

A very cool first vinyl outing by this New York group featuring Cassandra Stark (she starred in some of Richard Kern's films) on vocals. Both songs have a Lydia Lunch/Birthday Party feel to them, ugly yet soothing in an odd way. "Nanna" is slower and dirge-like with some harmonica thrown in. "Smalltown" has a more snotty and punk rock tone to it. I could use more of this. —Evan (Lungcast Records, PO Box 2479, NY, NY 10009)

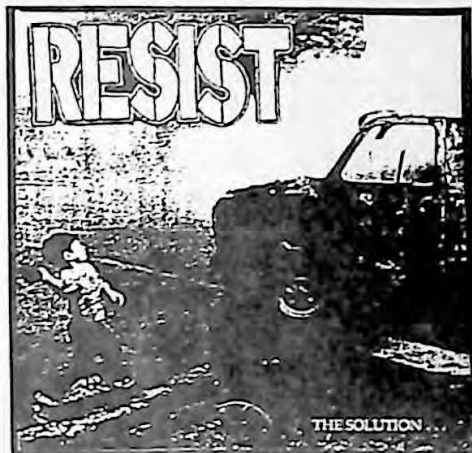
THE MORTALS — DISINTEGRATION [7" EP]

Garage psych complete with all the trimmings. This means all you losers thinking Mudhoney have a handle on something new and

unique get your dreams shattered. Mudhoney just cuss more and have bigger amps and more pedals. This shit is okay even if one of the three songs reminds me of Iron Butterfly playing surf music. —Evan (\$4.00 to Estrus Records, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227)

MY SIN — TRIBES [CD]

An entire album of truly original compositions remastered onto CD. My Sin produces music that will make even the most staunch critic of synthesizers bolt upright and take notice. This is Cyberpunk in its purist form — sometimes fast and raunchy, sometimes funky, always containing this amazing amount of explosive energy



that bursts out at the beginning of each song. The track "I'm Clean" is a good example. It begins with an unassuming bassline that turns into a barrage of noise and guttural vocals that scream "It's hard to have an attitude being clean." This song especially shows off My Sin's talent and command of his ensemble of computers and drum machines. —Kerin (Endless Music, PO Box 647, Los Angeles, CA 90078)

MYST — HIT OR MYST [LP]

Johnny Slippage, drummer for Myst, describes the recording of this album as a "tragic journey". The real tragedy here is in making a reviewer listen to this thing even once. It's a completely independent release, so I really wanted to give these guys a break, but the "living room" style recording is so terrible, the drumming so incompetent, the vocals and instruments are so out of tune with each other, and the music is so lackadaisical and derivative of early Fourwaycross, Abecedarians, Drowning Pool, Sisters Of Mercy, and other 60s/80s bands that it's really hard to locate the uncategorizable, ground breaking style they claim to possess. If Myst's strongest suit really is, as the press kit claims, "in the house of sound experimentation", then they are indeed, as they say, "a truly endangered species", at least in these pages. Come to think of it, Myst might be threatening music for Orange County papers. —Ethan

NECKBRACE — [7"]

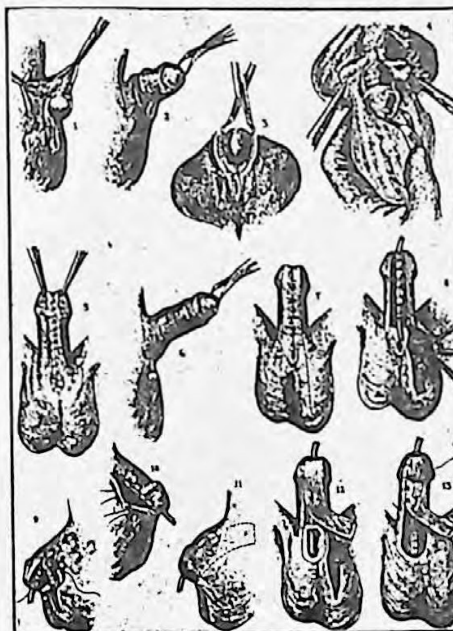
Formed way back in 1987, this Minneapolis hardcore outfit has just gotten around to their first vinyl offering, which is composed of some good DC-ish punk with interesting lyrics and some dumb guitar solos. The vocals sometimes seem hip-hop inspired in their delivery, and the drummer is a standout for his interesting beat combos but overall a touch of Bastards crunch might help make the project more heavy, especially vocally. The song "Spank The Baby", about domestic violence, does its job in telling a grim story, but overall the music smacks of too-good equipment and bad weather. —Tomás (Bodycast, PO Box 6174, Minneapolis, MN 55406)

HOMEANSNO — YOU KILL ME [LP]

A re-release of their first LP (1985). Some good songs, strong playing. Interesting look back at where this band came from. We hear the seeds that have given rise to their sound. Not as precise, not as confident, but still worth a spin, especially for fans who missed it the first time round. —Alan (Alternative Tentacles)

ORPHANS AND WIDOWS — VOO DOO [7"]

Wow! Expecting another fast rock 'n roll 7", I get this long, drawn-



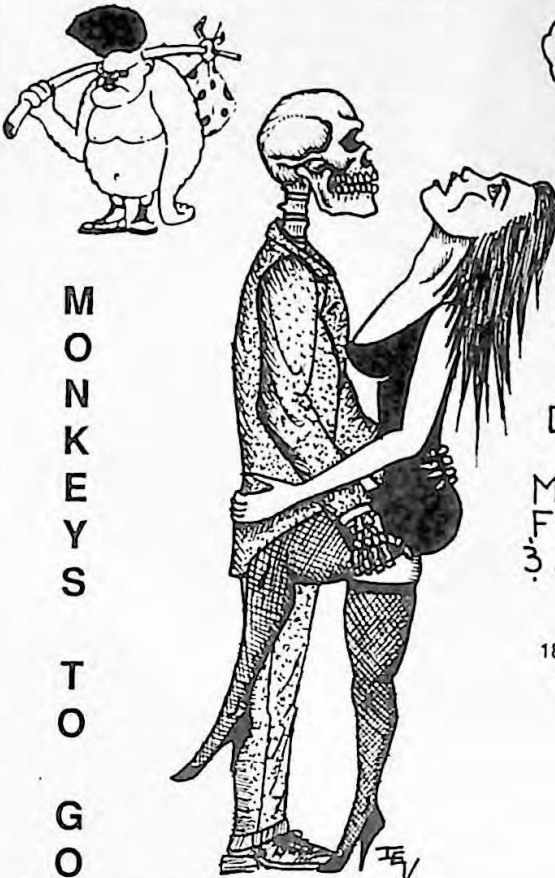


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out voice 'n background noise affair that has me doing the Crash Worship tango nude with belly-paint on. The singer works himself up to a frenzy, shouting "Shut up and leave me alone!" as distorted guitar and effects swell in the background to enormous proportions before fading into the distance. The music's skeleton is poetic and pure, its excess fat burned away by the hot Arizona sun, then blown clean by abrasive desert wind. —Wild Don, as seen on *People's Court* (\$3.00 to Orphanage Records, PO Box 315, 1702 W. Camelback, Phoenix, AZ 85015)

PITBULL — PITBULL (LP)

Full-throated, heavy-duty, stage-divin', slam-dancin', pit-moshin' metal/punk made interesting by some nitty drumming and vocals reminiscent of John Brandon of the Laughing Hyenas. The lyrics are of the usual "I'm gonna kick yer ass"/"The world's kickin' my ass" variety, but the way they're delivered... man. —Michael B. (promo-clipped by Nemesis)

POLYESTER DRAG QUEEN — CHARLIEHORSE BLOWJOB (LP)

I really didn't enjoy this. Neither would anyone with enough sense to hate lame Chili Peppers-style vocals backed by the sort of bland Hollywood-style rock that most of the bands in the opening slots at Club With No Name are famous for. The only thing I liked about this is that when vocalist M.C. Drag mumbles "C'mon... yeah..." during "Pussycat Lounge", he almost sounds like Thurston Moore. I like Sonic Youth. A lot. Fuck. I wish this was a Sonic Youth record. —Michael B. (Wretching Dog Records, 1085 Commonwealth Ave., Suite 109, Boston, MA 02215)

POST MORTEM — FESTIVAL OF FUN (7")

A very strange record indeed. Many of the songs start out like typical punk songs and then break into this jazzy funk stuff for a while. I catch a serious Minutemen influence fairly often. But then again, of the 18 songs there are a couple that lean in the metal direction. It's not amazing, but better than most. Limited edition of 500. Really cool cover art. —Evan (\$7 from 57 Chester Rd., Belmont, MA 02178)

POUCH — ROCK IS GOOD (7")

Pathetic distortion rock. Absolute dribble, tired and just plain shit. What? You haven't had it up to here with Soul Asylum rock? Legalize suicide and ship these clowns some razor blades. —Krk (Rockville)

PETER RAGAN — 898989 (C)

Very interesting tonal explorations. This isn't rushed like a lot of music I hear these days. It takes its time exploring the nuances of the interactions that have been set up. What am I talking about? A cassette's worth of electronically-treated percussion, processed to get a full range of sounds, then overdubbed for an ensemble effect. Expanding on the bare-boned metallics of Zev, Ragan's music is meditative, trance-inducing, yet not "new agey" like one would suspect. One piece is almost Indian-sounding, with a tamboura-like buzz running through it. These unique sound-poems would fit perfectly on the L.A. Mantra cassette series put out by A. Produce in the early 80s. Ragan stands out as someone with a unique vision. —Wild Don (128 E. Taylor, Phoenix, AZ 85004)

RESIST — THE SOLUTION...REVOLUTION (7")

A heavy package including poster, newspaper lyric sheet with

collages and articles (almost a mini-Profane Existence) and of course a record. We're talking quite competent thrash-anarcho punk stuff dealing with the big topics: racism and homophobia. Resist is a powerful combo who follow in the ways of Born Against and Nausea with a good batch of political tunes, each with a message, and a high production ethic for their music. It all combines for a solid LP effort worth your attention. —Tomás (Media Blitz, PO Box 86493, Portland, OR 97286)

ROCKET SCIENTISTS — PITH HELMET/I DON'T CARE (7")

"Classic style" wave rock à la the WeirDOS, Buzzcocks, with a great edge and cohesiveness. Tastes good like punk rock should. You don't need to be a Rocket Scientist to know this is hot stuff. —Elhan (Estrus Records)

ROCKO — NO MORE VINYL FOR THE MASSES (7")

This two song debut from San Jose's Rocko clocks in at 4:45 min. total running time with one song called "Fat Chicks that Smoke". The music rocks, the mix is good, the singer is pretty typical college-punk variety. The lyrics leave a lot to be desired. The music conjures up garage music from the late 60s and early 80s blended in an interesting manner, like a lesser Popdefect perhaps. A project that "gets their name out there", but more music will be the proving ground. —Tomás (Eight One Nine, 819 North Second St., San Jose, CA 95112)

GREG SAGE — SACRIFICE FOR LOVE (CD)

This is fairly on track with what I expected, a bit mellow and introspective, yet well crafted and enjoyable just the same. Being that Mr. Sage was the driving force of a great (and underrated) band, The Wipers, who unfortunately broke up, this will have to fill in those gaps left behind. His style of guitar playing and melodic sense are still here along with the sense of sadness always present in Wipers recordings. I bet he could still kick it live. —Evan (Restless Records)

SCHERZO — SUFFERING AND JOY (LP)

Oh no, Lookout's foray into polka? No, not quite, sorry. This melodic, introspective, socially aware record reminds me of Bad Religion's debut. There's compassion and rage and just enough drumming mistakes to keep this record off the melodic punk A-List-in-the-Sky that features the Decedents and few others. —Barney Satyr (Lookout Records)

SCHNITT ACHT — SUBHUMAN MINDS (CD)

Nitzer Ebb, Skinny Puppy, and Frontline Assembly. —Kerin (Cheeta Records, 3208-C E. Colonial Dr. #131, Orlando, FL)

SHADOW PROJECT — (C)

An L.A. underground supergroup of sorts, fronted by Rozz Williams from Christian Death, and featuring members of the Super Heroines, Hole, The Divine Horsemen, and others. Unfortunately, like most supergroups, the music fails to match the backgrounds of the individuals. The music is rather dated, routine, run-of-the-mill gloom/death rock which ultimately lacks excitement. "This Other Flesh" is somewhat interesting, but 45 Grave did this sort of thing better years ago. —Mike (Triple X, PO Box 85529, LA, CA, 90086-2529)

SHORT LIVED — ALL THE AGONY (LP)

I halfway had this nailed before I listened to it. The clue: band photo with a member sporting an Insted t-shirt on the back. San Diego punk rock with easily noted youngster worship of bands whose time has come and gone (7 Seconds, Youth Brigade, MIA, etc.). This would possibly be relevant if I were still 16, but I'm not and sorry to say it seems clichéd and naive in 1991. An "A" for effort (they produced and put this out themselves), but if you have surpassed your teens, beware. —Evan (10022 Halberns Blvd., Santee, CA 92071)

SILKWORM — INSIDE OUTSIDE/SLIPSTREAM (7")

This Washington-based band shows that they can be as melodic and driving as any East Bay band on side one, but the vocals sound like they're trying to imitate some big major label vocalist (try Michael Stipe or Bono). The flipside just doesn't go anywhere. I gave it something like ten spins, and I still wasn't impressed. Sorry. —D. Gomez (Punchdrunk)

SLAP OF REALITY — 3 LEFTS MAKE A RIGHT (CD)

If the musical hipsters at MRR can peg this band as "heavy yet poppy

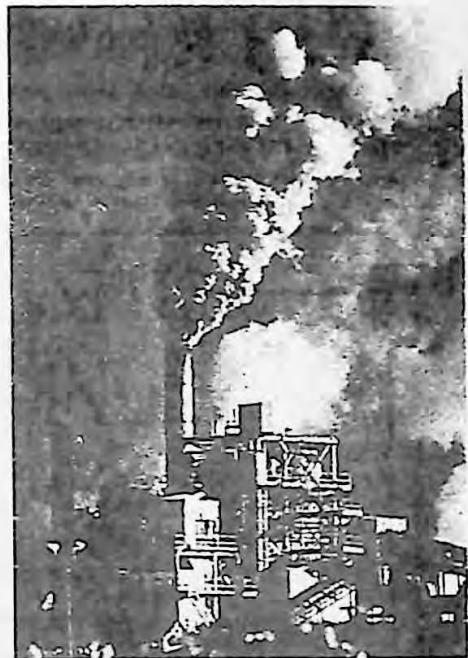
sound resembling... Big Drill Car, All" (press clippings) than you know this band is even worse than that, which is no easy task. Yet they somehow manage. Hard to believe America's youth can be so bored and boring in the process. —Krk (Cargo/Headhunter)

SUSHPUPIES — BLACKLISTED (DBL 7")

Garage style pop-punk from North Carolina put to vinyl four years after the band's demise. "Sleep" features some tasty bass playing. Trick acknowledgement goes to whomever was responsible for making the decision to press 3 of the sides at 45 and one at 33 RPM. Kept me on my toes. —Evan (Meal Records, 1220 South 120th St., Tacoma, WA, 98444)

SMASHING ORANGE — NOT VERY MUCH TO SEE/COLLIDE (7")

Where would this band be without their wah-wah pedal? The A side is 90s acid rock, with some groovy harmonizing and guitar that made me wish I had a strobe light in my room. "Collide" is straightforward noise—a lot of cymbal crashing and drum pounding throughout. Unfortunately, the singer is barely heard, and tries desperately to scream above all the ruckus. What does this all come down to? An eight and a half. —Kerin (Ringer's Lactate, PO Box 5012, Long Island City, NY 11105)



SNFU — THE LAST OF THE BIG TIME SUSPENDERS (LP)

"Chi Pig jumps a lot." I remember those were the first words that all my friends would say as we headed towards the car on our way to wherever SNFU were playing. Yea, he did jump a lot. So fucking what. My dogs jump a lot too. They were always OK, another good hardcore band people slammed to and I took photos of. This "best of" LP thing is ok, but so fucking what. Another record you don't need. —Krk (Cargo Records)

SPINOUT — DOCTORED FOR SUPER SOUND (7")

As far as straight ahead rock and roll goes, this is pretty good stuff. There are some interesting things going on here in this four song package (half of which was recorded live at KXLU). The vocals on "Rockin the Strip" are just cool enough to get my engine started. The live stuff is raucous enough to make me wish I would have been there. If it was a little heavier I would cite Sub-Pop-itus as a factor. Too bad I don't get to. —Evan (Delicious Vinyl, 6607 Sunset Blvd., L.A. CA 90028)

SPLENDOR — SHIFTLESS DISCURSIONS (C)

Annabelle says, "I had an ant in my ear one time, and this is what it sounded like." Short, simplistic instrumental songs that have a Nurse with Wound undertone. Some of these songs, though, border on the psychotic and the minimalistic. Recommended listening environment: a comfortable, old armchair with surround sound. —Kerin/Annabelle (1412 N. Oxidental, Los Angeles, CA 90026)

THE STORY — GRACE IN GRAVITY (CD)

Another one of those arty-farty Suzanne Vega/Kate Bush endeavors. The female vocal harmonies are pretty, but there are soooo many other bands with a similar style. Take Blackgirl, for example. I don't like them either, but at least they are not backed up by poor session musicians. —Ivy (Green Linnet Records, 43 Beaver Brook Rd, Danbury, CT 06810)

SUPERSUCKERS — JUNK (7" EP)

Three songs full of loud guitars and memorable hooks. Even after averaging in the Sub Pop factor, I still liked it enough to play it more than once. With a little horror schlock injected into it, "Girl I Know" would make a perfect Misfits song. —Evan (Empty Records, PO BOX 12034, Seattle WA, 98102)

TEN BRIGHT SPIKES — VERTICAL BRANDO (10" EP)

This record came with a bio that explained the release's key selling points: a) that it was a colored 10" vinyl record (are they assuming collectability here?) and b) that the band contains ex-members of punk super groups Social Unrest, UK Subs and Upright Citizens (does this imply credibility?). The sound is unfortunately reminiscent of mid-era Police with its mix of British New Wave rock and African influences, including a member playing viola. Another chapter in the saga of "punks get mature" with their music incorporating jazz and eclectic elements into a "new sound". The guitar playing is the only interesting element that comes to mind when stretching to find something good to say about this 10". Perhaps one of the key selling points here is that they're selling out. —Toms (promoclippped by New Red Archives)

TONYALL — NEW GIRL, OLD STORY (LP)

I dunno. Can't have much confidence in an album that most of the staff at Ben Is Dead headquarters passed up. I also can't have much confidence when the credits on the back of the album serve as a sort of disclaimer by the backup band, which is the band All. Who are they backing up? Well, it's Tony Lombardo, the ex-descendant who wrote some of the early Descendents classics. I guess he is still writing songs but has no band to play with. All volunteered (perhaps at gunpoint...) to be his backing band and despite their musical ability, they cannot do anything to help twelve of the worst songs I've heard in my life. It's bad enough that Tony uses the two words "girl" and "love" over fifty times (yes, I counted) on this album and that his weaselly voice appears on five of the twelve songs despite having Scott Reynolds at his disposal to possibly sing these songs ten times better, but that Lombardo's lyrics are so complacent and shallow that it makes me wonder when he wrote "Suburban Home" for the Descendents years ago that he was actually being honest when he opened the song with "I want to be stereotyped, I want to be classified." Scary, isn't it? —D. Gomez (promoclippped by Cruz)

TREE PEOPLE — GUILT REGRET EMBARRASSMENT (LP)

A follow up to their great "Timewhore" EP of last year. Treepeople makes this one rawer, probably much like they would sound live. These twelve songs can change your mood in an instant, taking you through an emotional ride though their confused souls. Nevertheless, it's still an enjoyable album. The only problem is that these guys are about a few years too late in their style of heavy melodic emotional so they'll probably be ignored, and that's too bad. —D. Gomez (Toxic Shock)

VANDALS — FEAR OF A PUNK PLANET (LP)

Wimpcore at its most annoying. Obviously the new reformed Vandals have no ideas of their own so they steal from the most popular bands of two years ago. More filler that they can put in their live set so they don't have to play the same three songs that everyone always wants to hear. More joke songs revolving around pop culture which is the classic style of The Vandals. Since they don't take themselves seriously, why should you? Save your money. The only thing we got to fear from the Vandals is their next record. —Dave (Triple X)

WARLOCK PINCHERS — CIRCUSIZED PEANUTS (LP)

More wacky hijinx inspired by boredom in Denver. They're at the Beastie Boys' "Cookie Puss" stage, still amusing themselves and using some great samples (like Casey Kasem cussing, etc.). They've done the media hoax thing Negativland did and gotten national publicity. They've also got a whole line of merchandise. My favorite: "Autographed Photo of a Chicken with a Roll in its Butt (\$1)." —Barney Salyr (Boner, Box 2081, Berkeley, CA 94702)

ZENI GEVA — BABY HUEY (7")

This Japanese guitar god came to America a while back and played a few shows around California. Unfortunately, I missed them completely, but everyone I talked to about him said that it was too loud and overbearing and that they couldn't take it for very long. Perfect. I liked him already! "Crowd Pissers" get my vote every time! I put on this 7" and turned it up loud... Yes!!! It's good-it's very good!!! Reminiscent of early Swans-repetitive, throbbing, alluring like brains n' eggs for breakfast. Play it... slip it in your mouth... mmm... mmm. —Pork (9028 E. Rancho Real, Temple City, CA 91780)

SPLITS AND COMPS

BURNT...YEAH! (7")

Side one of this New Mexico comp features those guys Vaginal Creme Davis loves to shrimp, Cracks in the Sidewalk. Psychotic 3/4 rhythm with chainsaw guitar that crawls up your spine and what a great feeling it is. The next two bands go for that larger than life heavy Seattle sound. Big Damn Crazy Weight pulls it off, Elephant doesn't. The last band on this comp, Allucaneat, is a bizzare mixture: if Jim Morrison hooked up with punks instead of those classically trained jazzbos that he ended up with. Overall this comp makes New Mexico seem like a cool place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there. —Dave (Resin Records)

COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUS (7")

Made by some collective in S.F., this 7" comp features four bands of the S.F. area. Blister starts it off with its heavy style of mindfucking that will make you glad that they broke up Christ On Parade to form this band. The godlike two person instrumental team of bass and drums called Sabot follows with a song that makes it possible for a person that hates heavy instrumental music to enjoy this, one of the few rhythm sections that can hold their own without a usual lead instrument. Assassins Of God comes off as a musician's band, yet their intensity outweighs their over-musical tendencies. The one duck on this comes from Tinnitus, which sounds like an offspring from an orgy of the six most popular college rock bands. Overall, the comp, along with the 10 page insert featuring examples of a D.I.Y. community, is a worthwhile, educational, and enjoyable package. —Dave (Broken Rekids)

JUST ANOTHER HUMAN SACRIFICE (C)

This is an EXCELLENT cassette. Professionally produced, there's not a dud among the lot. Unlike most compilations, it holds up to repeated listening, even deepening in quality as the songs meld together to make a statement about the human condition. Just Another Human Sacrifice refers to our loss of humanity as we approach mutually assured self-destruction, a feeling which is probably more acute in a place like Phoenix, where the desert waits to claim back what is rightfully its own.

The style varies from song to song, but the theme remains the same. Hernia Retraction Accordion play synthesized tone-poems. In Scarlet and Vile are influenced by gothic gloom music. Spiney Norman plays a beautiful, lyrical, totally lush tune that reminds me of Fairport Convention, yet with more 90s lyrics: "I'm gonna shoot you dead/then I'm gonna go to bed". Customers have a lean, driving Fall-like bass. Jumping Genes satirize yuppies and their whole gung-ho Desert Storm thing with "Yuppies on Parade", which is prophetic since the song was recorded in 1990.

The most memorable tune is "Through the Wire" by The Greys. With its Bowie-like vocals crooning over heavenly strings reminiscent of the Moody Blues, it lingers in the mind like a sweet perfume. —Blissed-Out Don (O-tu Records, P.O. Box 143, Tempe, AZ 85280-0143. \$7 ppd)

HULLABALOO/BHANG REVIVAL (7")

Hullabaloo give us a gritty funk number complete with horns and a voice that could melt iron. Bhang Revival are a grungy all girl band who adhere to the new formula well and deliver a slow burning minimal first song for those of us into it. —Evan (Toxic Shock, PO Box 43787, Tucson, AZ 85733)

NOISE FROM NOWHERE VOL. 6 — TREEPEOPLE/HOUSE OF LARGE SIZES — (SPLIT 7")

It's been a long time and Toxic Shock is still putting these comps out. Although the focus has shifted slightly from the punk-o-rama of the early 80s, the quality and relevance remains intact. HOL'S' song "Bankrupt in Hoven???" is a straightforward rock song with

hints of (dare I say it) Aerosmith riffing. The Treepeople deliver a dissonant, more punk anthem, "Neil's Down," that's full of angst and lust that made reviewing this 7" worth it for this issue. —Evan (Toxic Shock)

THE OPEN LID: 4 MINDBLOWING TRACKS FROM THE 60s—(7")

Cool blue 7-inch EP of authentic '60s psychedelia. If you're into the era, this is for you. Four obscure bands contained on this 33 RPM time capsule. (Every time I play it, I think of Dukes of Stratosphere.) Thanks to collectors who compile these quasi-bootleg collections, otherwise this stuff would be lost forever. No liner notes make this one more cryptic than it need be. —Alan (LSD 25, available from Dionysus)

SHREDDER COMP. #5 (7")

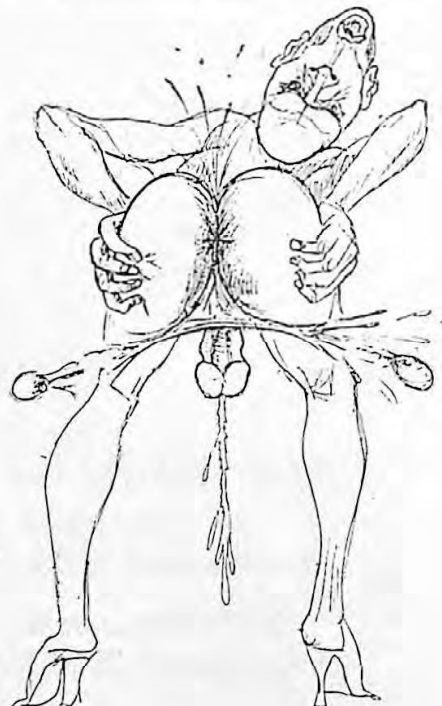
Shredder comps. are always hit and misses. In the past they put out some gems from the likes of Jawbreaker and Crimpshrine, but mostly you have to dig real deep in the shit to find something to treasure. What we have here on this 7" is pudre shit, nothing else. Ice Fan is typical pop punk, nothing much else. Dryrot with its positive punk clichés is an instant bore. Krupted Peasant Farmerz should be avoided at all cost. Those boys should stay away from their instruments until after puberty. —Dave (Shredder Records)

TANKHOG/WINDWALKER — A MINT IS A TERRIBLE THING TO TASTE (7")

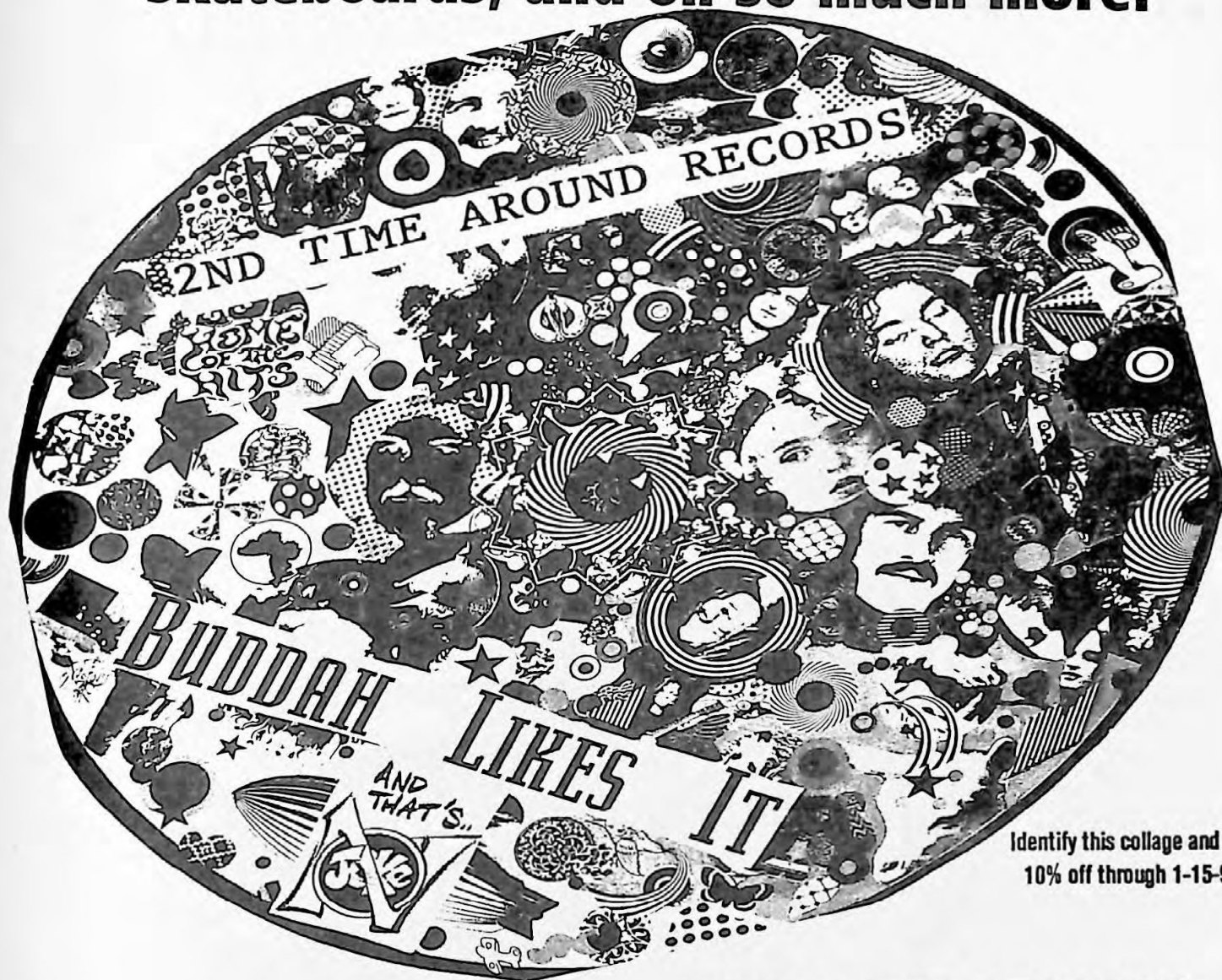
A very strange thing indeed. Two Canadian bands cover Ministry tunes with a punk rock flair. Tankhog do "So What" and Windwalker do "Burning Inside" with the added punch these songs deserved in the first place. A cool concept on a brand new label. —Evan (Mint Records, #699-810 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5Z 4C9)

THD COMPILATION (7")

Covering mostly Minneapolis and surrounding areas, this five band compilation has some decent hardcore and other rock. Porcelain Boys surprised me with their very safe Replacements-like song "Brain Train". I thought they were heavier. Downside take a bit of Soulsides and Dag Nasty to heart in their angry hardcore while the band Reach makes me think of British punk like Varukers but with a US cleanliness (sound-wise) in the music. They could be totally amazing in a year or so, or totally generic Fugazi-generation tripe, who knows? Never been able to get into the A.G.'s fraternity-brand of pop-punk and the track here is no exception. The band that completely stands out as far as originality and strength is Inspector 12 from Madison, WI, awesome they are. The to-DAT production makes this (for a 7") sound very good, smart mastering idea indeed. —Toms (THD 2020 Seabury Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55406)



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"I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but found him not."

--Song Of Solomon, 3:2

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YE HEATHENS! TRANSGRESSORS!! PHILISTINES!!! Thou art fraught with **INIQUITY!** Thy 9x6 manila clasp envelopes are filled with decrepit, foul recordings that carry with them the odor of **CARRION** and **DEATH**. Thou spreadest your wayward seeds-- they impute a race of **BLIND** and **FALLOW** men! Yea, but **THE PRICE OF YOUR SINS** is **HIGH INDEED!** And it does come to pass that thine eyes will see the **GLORY** of the **COMING OF THE LORD!** I am tramping thru the mail slot where the **DEMO TAPES** are stored! I am wading thru your **BLOOD** because your music makes me so goddamn **BORED!! GLORY, GLORY HALLELUJAH!! MY TRUTH IS MARCHING ON!!!**

RED PAINT PEOPLE

Little Butt

The slogan on the stickers that come in this package describe Red Paint People as being "Boring and to the point". Diogenes, hock your lamp--we got an honest man in the place! Sounds like Living Color without vocals.

GRENPETR

Al's Bar

This isn't a live tape. Can you beat that? Some band puts a lot of time into a really slick sounding tape and then calls it "Al's Bar", that rumpled downtown beergarden with the shittiest PA north of Tijuana. They even put a floor plan of Al's Bar on the cover just to reinforce the hoax. These studio recordings are a mixed bag of tame rock music with little new-age embellishments like Chapman Stick parts and chimney synthesizers in the mix. The liner notes, between-song segues and lyrics fairly ooze with social consciousness. I thought that I'd gotten hold of the L.A. Reader in a "Books On Tape" incarnation.

SYKOTIK SINFONEY

Songs That Start With An 'M'

Tight precision drumming, a tempo change every 15 seconds and Mixolydian guitar scales spewed forth at 190 m.p.h. add up to absolutely nothing of any interest to I.P. Freely. Unfortunately, the band declares here in the insert that "IF YOU DON'T LIKE US THEN YOUR (sic) A DICK". Well, that's rough; but I've still got to admit that trying to stuff my whole head and torso into a condom is a far more enjoyable prospect than the idea of ever having to sit through this tape again so I'll just have to try and accept my lot in life gracefully.

RESIST & EXIST

Hey It's Cool-I Only Exploit Vegetarian Chicks

Anarchy...Fullerton style! This musical co-operative ponders deeply a wide range of social issues as they mosh their way towards a better tomorrow. The males in this communal project want to see the world rid of sexism so that the skinny guys with egg whites in their hair will get all the girls. And the females in the tribe want to get everybody to be vegetarians; their tape comes with a booklet containing pictures of animal experimentation atrocities and cartoons of punker people smacking their lips as plates of tofu and broccoli stir-fry are laid out in front of them. I found this aspect of their manifesto to be exploitive, disgraceful and downright offensive. Stop the slaughter! Stop the murder!! Asparagus and walnuts are people too!

REFRIGERATOR

Lonesome Surprize

Shrimper Tapes have sent many of their offerings to the Anti-Demo Column for review, and so far they've been lucky. But it looks like they've spun the chamber once too often cause this time they get a bullet. Refrigerator: A piss-poor garage band trio, sounding like they're on cheap heroin, croaking out a lot of utterly pointless drivel.



ART & PACKAGING

BOOK? STICKERS?

SOUND QUALITY

LYRICS

LACK OF GUITARS

I HAD TO TITLE IT FOR THEM (-10 pts.)

LAME CONCEPT (see below)

THEY SEEM TO WANT TO GET SIGNED (-20 pts.)

ERASE TABS INTACT? (10 pts.)

GOT THROUGH IT WITHOUT VOMITING (20 pts.)

TOTALS

	Red Paint People	Gren Petr	Sykotic Sinfoney	Resist & Exist	Refrigerator	Lesser	Edgar Schwartz	Bunji Thump	Heaterhead	Sublime	Socketeye	Alex Quiñones	The Shatners	The Potatoes	Adam Maraland	Black Atmosphere	Horace Pinker	Dollritum	Frank Sinatra		
ART & PACKAGING	3	4	1	2	2	6	7	3	1	1	7	3	0	3	8	4	1	2	1	0	7
BOOK? STICKERS?	6	0	0	9	0	0	7	0	0	3	0	2	0	4	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
SOUND QUALITY	6	7	6	3	5	6	4	7	5	5	7	1	4	7	7	6	4	7	6	3	9
LYRICS	0	5	0	3	1	6	7	0	0	6	5	7	2	4	0	4	0	2	7	0	9
LACK OF GUITARS	0	5	0	0	0	9	9	2	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	8
I HAD TO TITLE IT FOR THEM (-10 pts.)	0	0	0	-10	0	0	0	-10	0	-10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-10	0	0	0
LAME CONCEPT (see below)	0	-10	-25	0	-10	0	0	-25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-15	-25	-15	0	-25	0
THEY SEEM TO WANT TO GET SIGNED (-20 pts.)	0	0	-20	0	0	0	0	-20	0	0	-20	0	-20	-20	0	-20	0	0	-20	0	0
ERASE TABS INTACT? (10 pts.)	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	10	0	0	10	0	10	10	5*	0	0
GOT THROUGH IT WITHOUT VOMITING (20 pts.)	0	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	0	20	0	0	20	0	20
TOTALS	15	31	-28	17	-2	47	54	-43	16	15	23	49	-14	-2	5	20	-27	2	39	-42	53

LAME CONCEPT SCORING

*Duct tape over the slots only nets 5 pts.

-10: TOO INTELLECTUAL TO HAVE A CONCEPT. Leave art school at once. Do not pass Go Do not collect \$200.

-15: DATED CONCEPT. Spare me--send it to Rolling Stone or their bastard spawn at Maximum Rock & Roll.

-25: SUCCESS CONCEPT. Hey, you're the next Warrant! Allow I.P. to give you a toilet shampoo!

SCORING:

81-100.....	MATHEMATICALLY IMPOSSIBLE--IT MUST BE SOMEONE I'M SLEEPING WITH
70-79.....	THE MESSIAH HAS RETURNED
40-69.....	DESERVES A HUNK OF THAT MICHAEL JACKSON BILLION
20-39.....	MAYBE THEY'RE GOOD OR MAYBE THEY JUST LEFT IN THE ERASE TABS
0-19.....	NOT MUCH GOING ON HERE--SAVE YOUR MONEY
-20- -1.....	SHOULD PUT AN AD IN THE RECYCLER AND SELL ALL THEIR EQUIPMENT
-55- -21.....	SHOULD GIVE THEIR EQUIPMENT AWAY AND THEN LIGHT THEMSELVES ON FIRE
-55 and under.....	MATHEMATICALLY IMPOSSIBLE--IT MUST BE A VENDETTA OF MINE

SABOT

Pam Kray

A couple of artists meet, screw, fall in love, jam together on bass (guy) and drums (girl), riff out on 8 different complex patterns, title them, decide that the best way to make music is without a singer because they always hog all the drugs and get a third of the money without having to load equipment, go into a recording studio, lay down the songs, bring in another artist to recite words over the first track, send the mix off to the duplicators, take a picture of themselves in their 'space', typeset thank you's to their friends and connections, paste the whole thing up on a board, send it to the printers, assemble and shrink wrap the contents, send the finished product to Ben Is Dead, wait like vultures beside the mailbox, hold their breath until the postman comes, snatch it from his calloused paw when he does, open up the issue, look for the I.P. Freely Anti-Demo Column, scan it furiously to find their review which says...Ahh, it's OK, but next time they should use a singer--instrumentals are boring.

LESSER

I Hate Me

Industrial acid music par excellence. No, not house music you moron--I mean really trippy stuff like distorted sheets of reverb, repeating-echo rhythms, sampled voices off the radio, treated instruments and loads of backwards satanic messages. The selections are punctuated by little snippets

of conversation, white noise, you name it. I dare you to try and follow their train of thought for more than 1:30. It's real cool. Try it with headphones--I recommend it! 'I Hate Me' is recorded onto other people's tapes with the original band's name rubbed off and 'Lesser' scratched into the shell with a razor blade. Their cassettes also come with a bonus razor blade taped to the box, presumably so you can carve other stuff, like 'song' titles and copyright info, onto your own copy.

EDGAR SCHWARTZ

Countdown To Rhinoplasty

Ohh...ohh noooo I really can't handle this one. Smooth slick commercial nonsense...I feel my messianic fury being aroused, dead spirits speaking through me now...This is so bad that I'm...beginning to...talk in...tongues...See them clamber, these nimble apes! They clamber over one another, and thus scuffle into the mud and the abyss...Towards the throne they all strive: it is their madness...Oftimes sitteth filth on the throne--and oftentimes the throne on filth...Just see these superfluous ones! Culture, they call their theft--and everything becometh sickness and trouble unto them!

BUNJI THUMP

Leap Of Faith

As Sabot found out, I'm not the biggest fan of instrumentals. However I have got to admit that I thought this band was much better before the singer opened his maw and ruined their introspective groove but good. The first couple of numbers featured dual feedbacking guitars with a meandering bass

line snaking about behind them. Then this magical singer grabbed the mike, waved it around like a sceptre and cast a spell over the studio-"Hey presto! We're the Grateful Dead!" I know when to leave.

HEATERHEAD

Live At Fillmore East

Scruffy, medium-tempo punk, laden with 'attitude' and so very 'alternative'. Well, actually, maybe they're not dated enough to really be called 'alternative'. To fit that slimy mold you have to be an incredibly much more bogus and awful band like Soundgarden or Nirvana or any of those other tedious half-baked cock-rockers currently plaguing the earth. These guys only marginally qualify for that tag, seeing how the music they copy from is only from five years ago, not 15 like with most big 'alternative' bands nowadays. At least Heaterhead write passable lyrics.

SUBLIME

Jah Wont Pay The Bills

This one is the most uneven tape of the month. The first couple of songs were a good accounting of ex-punkers doing reggae. But it appears that they were just crafty and sequenced the songs on this tape in order of merit. Slowly, over the course of the tape, their music degenerates from the solid opening track until it becomes, early on side two, the worst kind of antiseptic ska-ish junk. Ah well, 2 or 3 good ones ain't spit.

SOCKEYE

I've Got An Indian Reservation In My Cum

No NEA grant for these sensitive artists. In this offering, Sockeye bring you such timeless classics as 'Mushroom Gravy Ladled Over The Head Of My Dick', 'Funeral's Over-Let's Eat!' and 'Fuck Your Cat'. The sound is horrid, to nobody's surprise, and their playing? WOW! A between-song foray into Flipper's 'Sex Bomb' falls apart after a few bars, and on 'Emphysema', they sound like they're all playing the same song in different rooms. Art rock lives on 'Satan Medley'; they play various Black Sabbath riffs while singing, 'At the show I pick up chicks, just by chanting 'Six Six Six''. I found this music spectacular in it's intentional crass stupidity. I wholeheartedly recommend that you buy this one and put it on while watching the American Music Awards with the TV MUTE button on your remote lit up. But if you want to blow money on it, I should warn about the packaging-bubble wrap doth not a tape box make.

ALEX GUINNESS

Stuff That Matters

Some smart, ambitious dicklicker should seek this guy out and hire him as a literary agent. Somehow, inexplicably, he got this tape of his reviewed in Option and Alternative Press-you know, those dull magazines with the cover stories on the Replacements and the Meat Puppets? I don't know how he got this 10 year old (!) tape inbetween the mercenary pages of those rags but it seems to indicate that he has talent in some arena, and I think there's a future for him someplace in Hollywood although judging from the tape itself it's surely not connected in any way with playing, singing or writing music and he will do just fine in life provided that Sherriff Block issues a restraining order prohibiting him from ever coming within 500 yards of any tape recorder.

THE SHATNERS

Sad Encounter With Shirtless Boy On Short Bus Ride

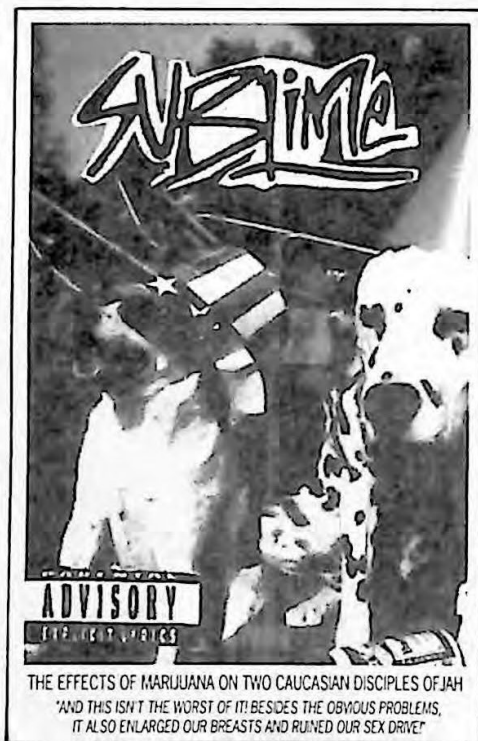
From the glossy pic enclosed we see we have here four guys in the same band who all buy their glasses at

Lenscrafters (an I.P. first-luckily for The Shatners I have no minus score for this phenomena). Oh, there is a girl in the band now as well. I was charmed by the fact that her hands were down her pants in the photo. They all strum Fender guitars with all their amps on '2' and sing their amiable little tongue-in-cheek love songs. I'll leave it to BAM magazine to suss out whether they're the next Violent Femmes or not; I hate that band too.

SPUNJ

Dark

I know that the current retro-70's trend has reached it's nadir when bands start sending in stuff that sounds like Pablo Cruise.



THE POTATOES

Sounds Good

The insert art features a crude drawing of a mowhawk person of indeterminate sex, with a peace sign tattoo on it's scalp, putting a flaming potato into it's mouth. My first thought was, 'Vegetarians in Pico Rivera? Preposterous!' And I think I was right. There's no evidence of punker solidarity in this tape that I could detect. The singer and drummer are both in a straightforward and slovenly punk rock groove, but the guitar tracks sound like they were lifted from the last Bad Brains tape. One or both of the guitar players in this group have got the Dr. Know hex on them big time. Uh oh, sounds like trouble-the breakup of the Potatoes is imminent! Someone get Tim Yohannon on the phone now! If anyone can get the punx to unite, he can!

ADAM MARSLAND BAND

Cool Songs Vol. 1 / Live Without A Clue

The liner notes of 'Live Without A Clue' go into great detail about the ever-so-humble Adam's disastrous cross-country move and how the band played a tour to apathetic crowds and the guy who was supposed to sublet his apartment when he was gone never showed up and he almost lost his Visa card. This bar rock sounds like something you'd hear coming out of a window at a BYU frat house keg party. It's

that strange breed of music made by people who could never make it in the music business that earn good money conducting seminars and lecturing to 19-year-olds on 'How To Make It In The Music Business'.

BLACK ATMOSPHERE

Seven And The Ragged Tiger

There aren't many bands around that can so accurately copy Bauhaus as does Black Atmosphere on this tape. I bet that with little effort you could get this band to play your upcoming 10 year high school reunion for free beer.

HORACE PINKER

Big Ugly

Nothing new here, just some desert punks who live on the outskirts of Phoenix and a tape of their six best songs swaddled in Santa Fe / peyote chic artwork. Their stuff is not bad though. The singer has a voice of some impact, and the band doesn't fuck around with a lot of neurotic, flashy fills or phrasing. Their music resembles Rites Of Spring and the like. I gather from the inscrutable lyric sheet that they're on the straight-edge tip, but I'm somewhat out of touch; at this very moment the whole band could be dealing smack out on Indian School Road for all I know.

DELIRIUM

The Dark Hours

This attempt at thrash is so poorly executed, even given the hideously narrow limitations of the genre, that.... NOOOO! NOOOOO! AAAARRGGGH I CAN'T STAND IT, I CAN'T GET THROUGH IT...I've gotta review something good or I'll go fucking RAVING MAD!! Instead of slogging through another tape by a bunch of dimwit metalheads, I think I'll put the space to better use and review 'In The Wee Small Hours' by Frank Sinatra....

FRANK SINATRA

In The Wee Small Hours

This 1955 classic, released hot on the heels of Sinatra's dramatic comeback triumph in the movie 'From Here To Eternity', is a melancholy tour-de-force; a passionate, perfectly cut gem from a consummate professional at the top of his game. Sinatra sings 15 songs of bittersweet romance, masterfully realized. Listen to the trembling in his voice at the end of 'What Is This Thing Called Love', or his reading of the line 'there is no...sunrise' in 'When Your Lover Has Gone'; no one else could convey the feeling of heart-break and loss quite like Frank. The arrangements of Nelson Riddle in 'Wee Small Hours' are second to none. His sophisticated woodwind obbligatos and enigmatic codas know no precursor. This tape is truly a gift from the gods.

THE SHATNERS/ 1440 E. 8th St., Long Beach, CA 90813
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RED PAINT PEOPLE/ 4707 Hazel ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143
ALEX GUINNESS/ PO Box 2046, Venice, CA 90294-2046
GREN PETR/ 213/687-9906
HEATERHEAD/ (714)538-4596
SOCKEYE/ c/o David Schall, PO Box 2143, Stow, OH 44224
RESIST AND EXSIST/ PO Box 6188, Fullerton, CA 92634
SABOT/ 2702 18th St., San Francisco, CA 94110
REFRIGERATOR/ PO Box 1837, Upland, CA 91785
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BUNJI THUMP/ 12976 Carmel Creek Rd. #176, San Diego, CA 92130
BLACK ATMOSPHERE/ 4862 Lynnfield St., Los Angeles, CA 90032
THE POTATOES/ 9546 Brierfield St., Pico Rivera, CA 90660
HORACE PINKER/ 1015 S. Stanley Pl. #22, Tempe, AZ 85281
FRANK SINATRA/ c/o Capitol, 1750 Vine St., Hollywood, CA 90028

'They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.'

--St. Matthew 15:14

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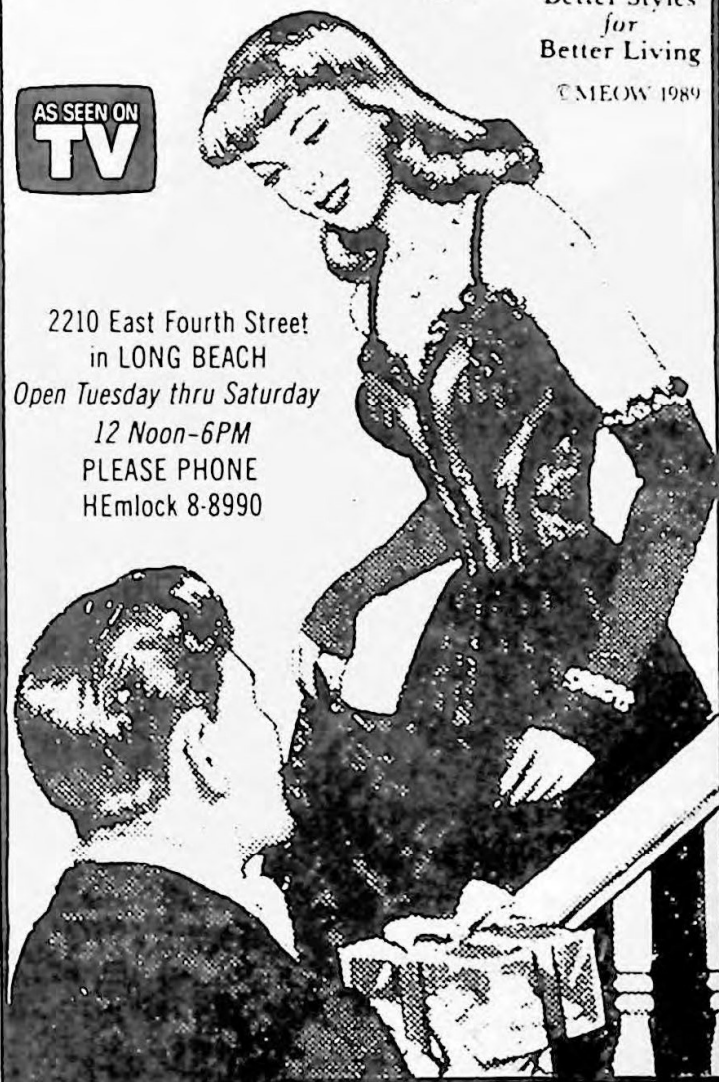


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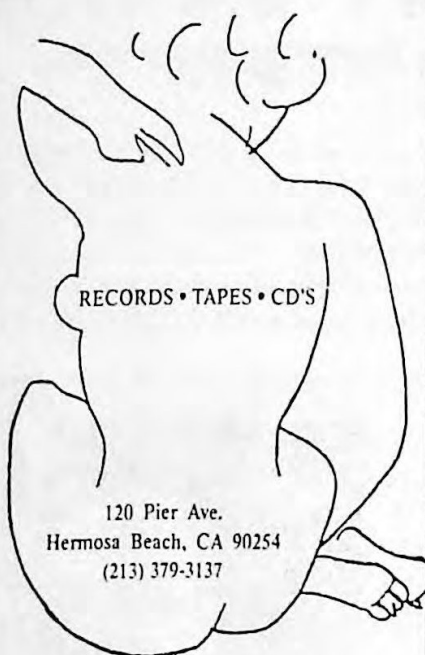
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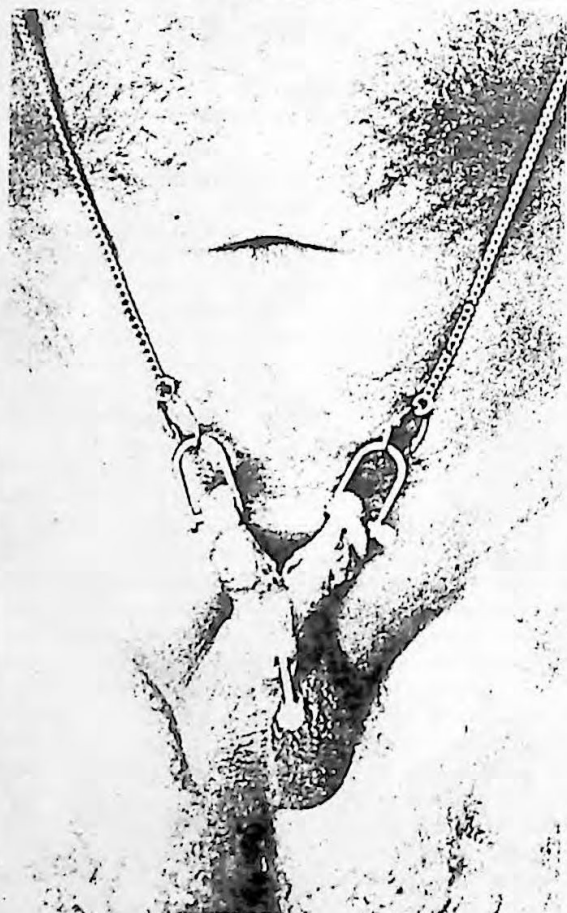
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JAMMING WITH NANCY DURAN

AND ALL THE Highbrow, Straight Edge, Local South Bayers



In our last issue Nancy joined a Led Zeppelin cover band with two jocks from the high school football team after the star quarterback, John Codello had purchased a Les Paul copy from Nancy's little brother. This was where Nancy had first learned how to play the A string on a makeshift bass guitar. Soon after she crashed her car, and was put on large doses of barbituates and narcotics to tend to her crash injuries. Due to her incoherent mental state she then joined Eight Ball, a band consisting of Nancy on bass, Bob McCormik on drums (also the Alley Cats drummer) and Bob's loyal sidekick Derick the speedmetal guitar player. She also befriended her long standing rock hero, Mack Blewer from Saffron Trust. By Monica Moran

I wasn't entirely sure whether Eight Ball had actually broken up or if everyone had simply quit coming to practice (which was now once every other two and a half months). In any case we were no more. I supposed that I could start another band: a band without members from the Church of Satan, without members from the Alley Dogs.

"I could write the music this time!... no more speedmetal guitar solos, no more Led Zeppelin covers!" A massively appealing concept — but would it work? I called up Mac Blewer to ask for his opinion on the matter. Mac and I met at a coffee shop.

"Mac, Bob hasn't heard from Derick, Derick hasn't heard from Bob... I think Eight Ball has split." Mac took a sip off his coffee.

"Uh hm," he said.

"What's rock 'n' roll anyway — a bunch of noise? I feel compelled to make a bunch of noise, Mac... I can't help myself! The way I see it I really have no other choice than to start a new band. What do you think?" Mac looked at his watch.

"Well that depends," he then said.

"Depends on what?"

"It depends on whether or not Bob McCormick will still play the drums—for your new band."

"You don't understand! I mean a brand new band—all new people... and we could practice more than once every three months," I beamed with a musing glow. Mac took another sip off his coffee.

"You should try to stick with Bob McCormick."

"Stick with Bob?" I didn't understand. Why Bob McCormick —

the closet speedmetal, the apathetic drummer?

"Well Nancy," Mac continued, "since you're not a very good bass player you may not be able to find any other musicians who would want to play with you." I was overcome with disbelief. Did Mac just say what I thought he said? It was true: I wasn't a very good bass player—I knew that, Mac knew that, the two people who had seen our gigs knew that, BUT DID HE HAVE TO SAY IT?! And besides, what made him think that nobody else would want to play with me? There were plenty of bass players just as shitty as me who had found other shitty musicians to play with them.

"...So you see Nancy... you should stick with Bob McCormick."

I was angry by the time I got to STP. Bigger was sitting at his desk.

"Bigger can go to hell!" I thought. And more rock stars—that day, Mr. and Mrs. Artforum were there, Mr. and Mrs. New York-teen-age-riot were sitting there right along with him. Bigger was ranting and raving—something about Lolita Munch's film *Gang Banged*. It had been the hot topic all week—the way Lolita had taken the barrel of a .357 Magnum right in the snatch. I sat down at the computer terminal and gazed into the screen. The IBM AT appeared to be grinning at me from the monitor. I could have sworn that I saw the green CRT letters appear: SHITTY BASS PLAYER, SHITTY BASS PLAYER... I frantically looked up and overheard Bigger discussing rock star stuff with the ultra-postmodern band who had come all the way from New York

City. "...Who do you guys think you are? The Rolling Stones?... You barely sold 10,000,000 records last year!" That was when I realized that even if I weren't a shitty bass player and had sold 10,000,000 records last year, some guy like Bigger would sit there and tell me that I wasn't the Rolling Stones.

"My God! I'm doomed!" The STP walls began to close in on me. I could hear Iggy Pop on the STP radio "...Now I'm gonna' be twenty-two... nothin' left for me and you..." I had to get out of there! I staggered to Bigger's desk.

"I forgot to tell you... I have an appointment... with... with a doctor... yeah, a doctor, that's right!" Bigger and the postmodern rock stars shook their heads disapprovingly as I ran out the door. I walked along the streets. The traffic went by. I supposed that I could keep on going. I turned around: STP was still discernible.

"Just keep on walking in the opposite direction, without looking back—before the corruption finally catches up with me!" I was still in one piece. But who would enter all those names and addresses? The mailing list had been entrusted to me. I couldn't just abandon ship. Could I? I vacillated for a while on this thought, decided to do the noble thing and headed back. The STP Records building loomed up ahead in the distance. I could hear someone

shouting as I approached the front entrance.

"Don't look at me with the crazy eyes!" He was shouting at the STP employees, "I see you! You're looking at me with the crazy eyes!" I had seen his face before—sitting in a Volks on the cover of a record and there he now stood, accusing everyone of looking at him with the crazy eyes.

"I'm not crazy! SO DON'T LOOK AT ME WITH THE CRAZY EYES!" I tried to avoid looking into his face for fear that he would think that I too was giving him the crazy eyes. I crept back to the terminal (the one placed directly below a "Who's got the 11 and 1/4?" poster) and picked up a tiny scrap of paper from the box of many where I continued entering the names and places of those fortunate enough to be miles and miles away from the wholesordid scenario when I felt a tap at my shoulder. I jumped high out of my chair; my nerves were



catching up with me.

"Hi, I'm Frank Zott." Frank Zott held out his hand and grinned from ear to ear.

"Huh, he really doesn't seem so crazy." I shook his hand. Frank Zott then went back to his heated discussion.

"I'M NOT CRAZY! SO DON'T LOOK AT ME WITH THE CRAZY EYES! Hell! We had better figure out this side-mouse punk rock! We ain't got no bourg—not us dudes in PEDRO!" What did it all mean?

It had begun to get dark outside—darker than usual. I left STP and started home. When I arrived Lennerd Bosco was waiting at my door. He made frequent pit stops at my house to drop off flyers for any upcoming Tijuana Souvenir Shop gigs. Lennerd was wearing his favorite Hawaiian shirt—there were rubber spiders, snakes and lizards safety pinned to his shoulders and sleeves. Their appendages and tendrils jiggled as he walked toward me. It was all really quite animated.

"Hi!" He spoke very articulately, "I have come by to drop off some flyers for the next Tijuana Souvenir Shop show—our featured dancers will be rubbing lemons all over their nude bodies. You should try to make it!" Lennerd handed me a flyer; it looked like it may have been an original Edmond Hettibon—but there was no way to know for certain since all flyers looked like original Edmond Hettibons.

"Gee, thanks Lennerd." I folded up the flyer and put it in my pocket.

"I heard that Eight Ball has broken up—you know you can always join Tijuana Souvenir Shop," hesaid. Tijuana Souvenir Shop had seven guitar players, four bass players, two drummers and a virtual chorus line of dancers. Lennerd, however, was their only front man. Anyone who had the need to join was permitted to do so—but I figured the last thing they needed was another bass player, let alone a shitty one.

"Do you still play the drums, Lennerd?" I asked. Before Tijuana Souvenir Shop, Lennerd had played the drums in Joey Eighty's band. It was such a shame—hiding Lennerd behind a drum kit the way they did; he and his rubber spiders just seemed to belong up front



where everyone could enjoy them. But I supposed if Lennerd played the drums for my new band he could still front Tijuana Souvenir Shop—an artistic compromise. Lennerd agreed but we needed a place to practice. Tijuana Souvenir Shop never actually practiced so they didn't have one.

"Let's ask Willy Stevens if we can practice at CCH (Convalescents Central Headquarters)," Lennerd suggested. Willy's band, The Convalescents, wrote songs mostly about food and an occasional male chauvinistic statement. Being aware of this I was wary to enter the office located behind a bar and grill one block north of Pacific Coast Highway. Lennerd and I walked through the door. There was a tall, pale, skinny, blond guy talking on the telephone. A sign hung above his head that read: FILO GOES TO THE UNIVERSITY. He looked at me and then my crotch, which is where his eyes remained. I folded my hands to block his view as casually as possible—standing the way Jackie Kennedy did when she gave a tour of the newly refurbished White House.

"Who are you guys?" he asked us, eyes still on the crotch.

"We came to see Willy... we need a place to practice," Lennerd said. The pale guy's eyes had finally left my crotch but were now on my tits. I folded my arms in front of them. When I did, his eyes once again went back to the crotch. I was obviously fighting a losing battle. An ape-like guy then came bouncing into the office; he sort of looked like Al Franken. He was wearing one powder-blue Converse and one pink.

"Hey," he said, "Who are you guys?" Willy gave me the quick once-over; first the tits then the crotch. He must have decided that they weren't his type because his eyes immediately went back to my face.

"We're looking for a place to practice," I said. Willy stood with

his mouth slightly ajar, as he gave a blank stare off into space. He assumed this expression for about four minutes

then hesaid, "Do you guys have a band or something?"

"Yes we do," Lennerd interjected, "I play the drums." Another four minutes stare from Willy. "Well, what do you play?" Willy then asked me.

"I play the bass, but we still need a guitar player and a singer." My singing days were over. Like Pavlov's dogs, I had some conditioning instilled in me due to the various electrical shocks I had received during my Eight Ball days which caused me to salivate and drool every time I considered singing.

I was still, as I would be for an eternity, inputting the STP mailing list one tiny scrap of paper at a time: Curt Mack, 1213 Pensacola, Florida... Joe Archibald, 769 Louisville, Kentucky... Every once in a while there would be a comment written next to the address like: YOU GUYS FUCKIN' ROCK or SUCK MY DICK. One or two of the names and addresses were even written in blood. The only real excitement I got was when a poor unsuspecting STP recording artist would come through the door as Bugger would leap out of his chair while shouting profanities, and Frank Zott, of course. Frank Zott was now my rock hero for a number of reasons. The first of them that, since Mac Blewer had informed me of my deficient musical aptitude I had ousted him from rock hero status. The second, Frank Zott was also a bass player. He would walk through the STP Records door like some demented version of the American Dream. He was a blue-collar type—had some insane work ethic. I would hear stories of how Frank Zott used to work double shifts at the Jack in the Box while his band wasn't touring and how he practiced the bass eight, sometimes nine hours a day...

My musical preferences seemed to have taken a turn—art damage; lots of feedback, lots of distortion. I now wanted to be the bass player of Pussy Galore and

Frank Zott of course. My new musical direction made for easy song writing and composition. All I really had to do was hit all to the strings at once open and let them ring for several minutes then maybe throw in some dissonant minor note. Lennerd and I called our new band Lab Rat, even if we weren't really a band, just a rhythm section. Lab Rat went on singerless and guitar playerless for several months until word got out amongst all of the Tijuana Souvenir Shop members. Their front man was jamming elsewhere! Two of them came to check out Lab Rat.

"Nancy, this is Louie and Bert," Lennerd introduced us, "Louie plays the guitar and Burt is a Tijuana Souvenir Shop dancer." I immediately noticed that Burt, the Tijuana Souvenir Shop dancer, was carrying two cases of beer; one under either arm. I thought for a moment that perhaps Bert had misunderstood, been misinformed, thought that there was some kind of party going on. I soon learned that those two cases of beer were intended for Bert alone. Louie began to set up his equipment. He had a Stratocaster with yellow shag carpeting glued to the body. Bert then cracked open a beer, then another, then another. Louie's guitar playing was all the art damage one could possibly hope for in a lifetime. After one and a half hours of it I found myself, once again, changing my musical direction. We continued to jam... Bert continued drinking. By the time we were through Bert had killed the entire two cases. One case of beer contains four six packs. Each six pack contains six twelve ounce bottles of beer. Six times four times two equals forty-eight.

"MY GOD! BERT JUST DRANK FORTY-EIGHT BEERS! SOMEONE CALL AN AMBULANCE!" I shouted.

"Shiiiiitttt—noooooo probleeeem," Burt slurred and stumbled. Bert managed to make his way over to Lennerd's drum kit where he then proceeded to put Keith Moon to shame.

"You didn't say that he could play the drums too," I said to Lennerd.

"Oh, yes. Bert is a very good drummer, probably one of the best around." After Burt was finished with his drum solo, he took out a baggie of marijuana, rolled a joint the size of a Cuban cigar, then smoked it.

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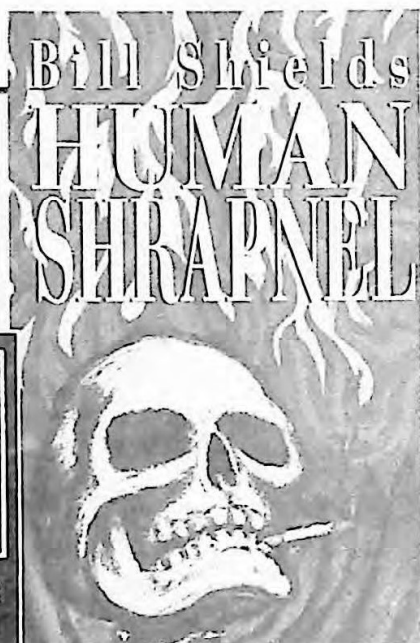
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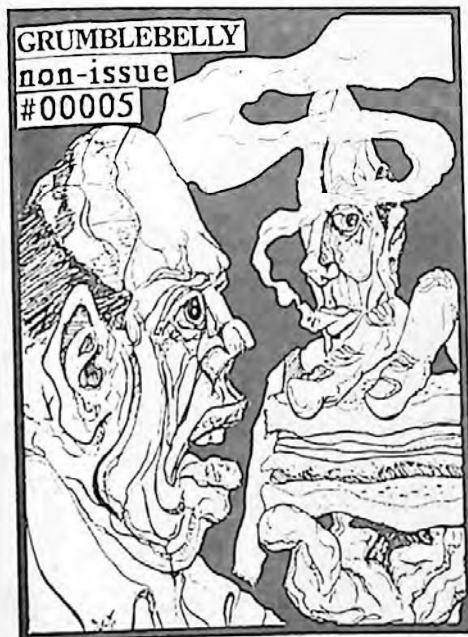
PUBLICATIONS

ANSWER ME, Vol. 1, No. 1, 75 pgs.

An expensively printed ego trip from a Hollywood man and wife (sic) team, *AM* tells you right off to "Forget what all the other mags tell you... we're (too) real", then proceeds to choose and cover topics with all the "reality" of *The LA Weekly*, right down to a "24 Hours on Sunset" story which nearly duplicates one *LAW* did on Ventura Blvd. a few years back. Other features rehashes include Holly Woodlawn, Russ Meyers, Public Enemy, Twelve Step programs, Timothy Leary, and profiteering occult religions. Meltzerisms abound, in every gender. Maury Povich might find this stuff titillating — can tanning salon ads be far behind? — Mikki (\$2 from Goad to Hell Enterprises, 6520 Selma Ave., Ste. 1171, Hollywood, CA 90028)

ANUBIS, No. 4, 50 pgs.

No staples to bind the recycled xeroxed pages of this zine which is mostly opinions and cartoons. The content includes a series of poetic graphic short stories dealing with racism and isolation. Most of the anti-racist commentary is in the form of sarcastically portrayed racist scenarios which often become confused as to their motivation. Anubis has a stream of consciousness flow to it which seems to last through its 50 pages. Call this zine a heavy dose of anti-authoritarianism from a youthful and learning perspective which is often the most honest perspective. Good energy behind this project. — Tomás (PO Box 1253 Placentia, CA 92670)



ATTITUDE PROBLEM, No. 9, Sept 1991

Big sized skate-paper with a very thoughtful editorial regarding the "burn", which is not related to Jane Fonda, but to torching the barriers in your mind and the minds of others. Featuring impressive artwork, fiction, and motivation, *AP* speaks to spiritual and physical concerns with (somewhat brief) features on macrobiotics and the origins of ancestor worship. A strong ethical feeling here, though I'm still wondering why they put a

warning about the consequences of their "scams" section, but not one near the (very friendly) Zendik Farms interview? — Mikki (no price; letters and contributions are welcomed by Bandhu Scott Dunham, PO Box 703, Clarkdale, AZ 86324)

BLACKMAIL No. 6, 42 pgs. \$2.25

Formerly known as *The Edge*, this Kentucky scene thing has a hate mail section, and a fairly detailed article on how the anti-war movement failed, along with reviews of ska and hip-hop records (a change in the underground zine world). Athens, GA gets some investigation as to its local band scene, short stories appear here and a long discussion of creation theories rounds things out. For what the zine has in content it lacks in luster and layout, which was at times snoreville, man. — Tomás (Rt. 3 Box 284 Owenton, KN 40359)

DISONANCE, March 91, 12 pgs, \$1

You want a strong dose of New Jersey indie culture? Throw that *Jersey Beat* in the Hudson. (*The Hudson's in New York, pal, try the Raritan or the Delaware.* — Bob the Proofreader) Dissonance has reports on clubs, scenes, where to go, NJ subculture figures and a whole summary of the Garden State's happenings. Bands: from Bouncing Souls to Spy Gods. The editor's just began getting into industrial dance music so reviews and blather about the Wax Trax scene also appear. A funny comic on the different types of industrial dance scenesters is humorous, and nice typeset print makes this an easy read. A good "locals" zine worth getting to know. — Tomás (PO Box 4722 Highland Park, NJ 08904)

EMILY'S HIP POCKET, No. 4, 8 pgs. Free w/stamps

Immensely entertaining is one way to describe this down to earth labor of love from a Michigan pop fanatic. Interviews here with Black Tambourine (one of Slumberland's finest bands), the Pastels and Tsunami. A light-hearted attitude is apparent throughout this short but informative bit o' pulp. The review section is totally fab with Sarah Records and the whole rest of the anorak pop underground in there with a penetrating eye on the current noise scene. Throw on a smart shirt and crank up yer old stereo for this wailing ghost ride through the back alleys of indie music. Cheers! — Tomás (1475 Latson Rd., Howell, MI 48843)

EXIT, No. 5, 98 pgs. \$13.00

This tabloid format glossy-covered art and literature publication is a gathering of creative geniuses who are dedicated to examining the profane and excessive expanses of human culture. Los Angeles residents who have visited La Luz de Jesus art gallery have seen some of these greats before: Robert Williams, A.C. Samish, Joe Coleman etc. *EXIT* features a lengthy series of pictorial interpretations of quotes by Friedrich Nietzsche, a history of the Swastika, material on cannibalism, some comic short stories by Raymond Pettibone and Jim Blanchard ("The Execution Of Carl Jung") and mind blowing graphics throughout by J.G. Thirlwell and my personal fave Steven Cerio (who's done covers for the Dust Devils). Other than receiving a copy for review I don't know how I would have been able to afford this although it is apparent that this is a costly and extremely time consuming endeavor for the editor to have undertaken, even in terms of finding a printer who would work on such material. It's hard to sum up in review the depth and power that a collection of art and artists like this holds, *EXIT* seems to have succeeded



in bringing together the definitive who's who of the underground American art world and it's definitely (not for the weak of stomach) something to be consumed. — Tomás (PO Box 1405 New York, NY 10011)

FIFTH ESTATE, Vol. 26, No. 2 (337), late summer 1991, \$1.50 Another energized offering from Detroit's committed collective. While giving extensive coverage to local struggles, *FE* also analyzes the war as spectacle, gives briefs on international movements, and re-evaluates Kropotkin's contribution to the anarchist movement. Though *FE* is considerably more accessible than some of its collegiate journals—almost tabloid like at times—they are more than capable of taking on the big guns, and deliver rigorous critiques of both Noam Chomsky and John Zerzan, who have dominated discourse of late. Also has poetry and excellent, in depth book reviews. — Mikki (*Fifth Estate*, 4632 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48201)

FLYPAPER, No. 1 & 2, 3 1/2 x 4 1/2

A collection of "street art, underground art" of the music scene. With its pocket size, clean appearance, and good intentions this project is a pleasure. Flypaper is a contributory oriented publication and in order to generate a better response they have stated that they will return any fliers sent for them to print, and will also send you a copy of their booklet for free. So, maybe I will send in my fave Dick Tit flyer that I've got on my refrigerator. — Darby (Greg Hurd, 300 W. Bosley, Alpena, MI 49707)

GRUMBLEBELLY, Non issue No. 00005

Heavy black layout, typeset text, a page of pithy quotes, book reviews of standard fare, lots and lots of fanzine reviews for a hair of the price of FSS, an interesting glossary of common "scenester" terminology such as "emo-core", "DIY" and "sold out" plus record reviews and a mish mash of strange graphics. Somewhat punk in presentation and attitude. Sorry, but that's the bare bones of it,

nothing to rave about. Ear Of Corn, what's your take on this zine?—Tomás (2622 Princeton Rd. Cleveland Heights, OH 44118)

HAMSTER OF DEATH, No. 1, 44pgs., digest, \$1.00
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thing. —Marcel (c/o Gary Gitting, 307 Bloxwich Road, Leamore, Walsall, West Midlands, WS2 7BD, England)

PSYCHEDELIC ILLUMINATIONS, Summer 1991, 36pgs

With stylish typesetting and colored paper, PI looks to open the cranial doors for those interested in networking within the whole New Age-Grateful Dead-Cyber Punk culture. This mag falls somewhere between *Whole Earth News* and *Technology Works*: a kettle bubbling with a stew of overly optimistic (for my tastes) articles on visionary consciousness, hemp and other methods of uniting the human race through psychedelic experience. A New Age *High Times* perhaps? Try applying these ideas to inner city poverty, delirium, forced separation and gang violence. Would there be change? Perhaps if all these do-gooders would come out of their log cabins and take a reality pill with a shot of action-rather-than-theory results might occur. Until then, be weened on the likes of Terence Mc Kenna and Mark J. Plotkin and other radicals that the editor doesn't necessarily endorse. —Tomás (P.O. Box 3186 Fullerton, CA 92634)

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TALES OF BLARG, No. 3, 40pgs, 75¢

"Read Blarg" seems to be the key phrase of the fanzine scene these days. This is only issue three and Blarg, celebrating their one year anniversary, already has a collection of groupies and servants. What are we doing wrong? Newspaper/book excerpts, short stories or "tales", with contributions from all the really famous East Bay punks: Chrissier, Eggplant, editor Olga and more. There's even a photo spread with the Blarg pin-up Jake of Filth (I hope they do one with the singer of Monsula soon!) and a reprint of natural health care for women from the Yeastie Girlz' "Ovary Action" 7" (If women really took control over their bodies they'd never have to worry about the harmful effects of the pill, tampons, abortions...). This is compiled in a somewhat rough but readable digest format. Interesting but I wish it was bigger. —Darby (c/o Olga Snodgrass, P.O. Box 4047, Berkeley, CA 94704)

VIRAL PRESS, No. 1 (Autumn 1991) 30pgs. \$1.00

A totally brilliant first issue for the stylish VP. Interviews range from Billy Childish and Thee Headcoats to ska man Roland Alphonso and the revolutionaries known as Nation Of Ulysses. Dare I forget spots on Mecca Normal and The (fabulous) Mummies? No sir! This is a rock em', sock em', rev up and go-go cart coaster of reviews, film critique and a wee bit of fiction. Don't wait sayeth the muse; grab yourself some sick days off and bask in this here zine's fine musical/printworthy disease. —Tomás (C/O Matt Kelly 1411 Pacific Ave., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266)

BOOKS

THIS'LL KILL YA

by Harry Willson; paperback, 184pgs

You've got to wonder about a book when the blurbs on the back are from his own publishing house and the man who produced the book as a stage play. In any case, this collection of four stories isn't likely to impress many others. The title piece, a fable about censorship, uses the old Boccaccio trick of a story about the story that is being read (or in this case, a book about the book that's being read), but the ham handed "suspense" and leaden foreshadowing reduce the metatextual attempt to a theatrical shortcut. For color and point of view, the sexist, stereotypical characters and cloying dialogue paint a picture of an author afraid to take risks. The other stories, a Stephen King-ish report on the end of the world, and a Methuselah narrative, continue to underestimate the audience's interpretive ability and the potential of language to convey the rather ominous statements that Willson is trying to get across. An unsatisfying project from some (apparently) well read people, judging by the contact list at the back. —Mikki (Ill Publishing, PO Box 170363, San Francisco, CA 94117-0363)

"THE SECRET LIFE OF A SATANIST: THE AUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY OF ANTON LAVEY"

by Blanche Barton; hardcover, 262pgs, \$19.95

This book gives a glimpse into the dark and secretive life of the founder of the Church of Satan, Anton LaVey. Starting with his childhood, the author chronicles the events that influenced LaVey's way of thinking and later manifested themselves in his teachings and rituals. While most of the information documented is very interesting and the book, as a whole, is insightful, the author tends to jump around in time and can leave the reader feeling somewhat disconnected. This, however, is the only negative aspect in a truly entertaining story of one of the more interesting men alive.

The most interesting sections of the book are the ones that deal with the formation of the church and the backgrounds of the original founding members including filmmaker/author Kenneth Anger. From *A Topless Witches Review* (a vaudeville act that cast Susan Atkins as a vampire) to weekly lectures on witchcraft and lycanthropy to Church of Satan "grottos" worldwide, the growth of LaVey's organization is phenomenal.

LaVey's philosophies are the most valuable part of this book. Sometimes difficult to grasp but none-the-less fascinating. Satanism is presented in an easily embraceable package. Unlike other orthodox religions LaVey's Satanism is not sacrifice without much reward but instead appears to be reward without much sacrifice. It is presented as the liberator of inhibitions and doubt but of course indulgence is up to the reader. Various Satanic texts make up the appendix including the nine Satanic statements, the 11 Satanic rules of the earth, and the nine Satanic sins. Overall this is a great read though books authored by LaVey himself, the Satanic Witch especially, are considerably better written.

A few weeks after reading this book I came across an interview with LaVey in *Rolling Stone*. Blanche Barton, the author, is LaVey's live-in lover, which might explain why she was (unfortunately) chosen to write his biography. The article also goes on to discredit much of LaVey's background, including his associations with Marilyn Monroe, the San Francisco police Department, and others. When confronted with these inconsistencies LaVey is quoted as saying "I don't want the legend to disappear. There is a danger you will disenchant a lot of young people who use me as a role model." This paves the road for a new book: *Secret Life of a Satanist part 2*. —Kerin (Feral House, P.O. Box 861893, Los Angeles, CA 90086-1893)

COMING NEXT ISSUE: Joe Carducci's *Rock and the Pop Narcotic*, J.G. Eccarius' *We Should've Killed the King*, and more.

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Comix with lots o' winnies, fucking n' sucking. D. Gregory's line work stands out the strongest. Along with poetry this is a good start. —Marcel (Dan Gregory/Spoe Monkey Grafx, PO Box 805, Newcastle, CA 95658)

TALES OF BLARG, No. 3, 40pgs, 75¢
"Read Blarg" seems to be the key phrase of the fanzine scene these days. This is only issue three and Blarg, celebrating their one year anniversary, already has a collection of groupies and servants. What are we doing wrong? Newspaper/book excerpts, short stories or "tales", with contributions from all the really famous East Bay punks: Chrissier, Eggplant, editor Olga and more. There's even a photo spread with the Blarg pin-up Jake of Filth (I hope they do one with the singer of Monsula soon!) and a reprint of natural health care for women from the Yeastie Girlz' "Ovary Action" 7" (If women really took control over their bodies they'd never have to worry about the harmful effects of the pill, tampons, abortions...). This is compiled in a somewhat rough but readable digest format. Interesting but I wish it was bigger. —Darby (C/O Olga Snodgrass, P.O. Box 4047, Berkeley, CA 94704)

VIRAL PRESS, No. 1 (Autumn 1991) 30 pgs. \$1.00
A totally brilliant first issue for the stylish VP. Interviews range from Billy Childish and Thee Headcoats to ska man Roland Alphonso and the revolutionaries known as Nation Of Ulysses. Dare I forget spots on Mecca Normal and The (fabulous) Mummies? No sir! This is a rock em', sock em', rev up and go-go cart coaster of reviews, film critique and a wee bit of fiction. Don't wait sayeth the muse; grab yerself some sick days off and bask in this here zine's fine musical/printworthy disease. —Tomás (C/O Matt Kelly 1411 Pacific Ave., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266)

thing. —Marcel (c/o Gary Gitting, 307 Bloxwich Road, Leamore, Walsall, West Midlands, WS2 7BD, England)

PSYCHEDELIC ILLUMINATIONS, Summer 1991, 36 pgs
With stylish typesetting and colored paper, PI looks to open the cranial doors for those interested in networking within the whole New Age-Grateful Dead-Cyber Punk culture. This mag falls somewhere between *Whole Earth News* and *Technology Works*: a kettle bubbling with a stew of overly optimistic (for my tastes) articles on visionary consciousness, hemp and other methods of uniting the human race through psychedelic experience. A *New Age High Times* perhaps? Try applying these ideas to inner city poverty, delirium, forced separation and gang violence. Would there be change? Perhaps if all these do-gooders would come out of their log cabins and take a reality pill with

BOOKS

THIS'LL KILL YA

by Harry Willson; paperback, 184 pgs
You've got to wonder about a book when the blurbs on the back are from his own publishing house and the man who produced the book as a stage play. In any case, this collection of four stories isn't likely to impress many others. The title piece, a fable about censorship, uses the old Boccaccio trick of a story about the story that is being read (or in this case, a book about the book that's being read), but the ham handed "suspense" and leaden foreshadowing reduce the metatextual attempt to a theatrical shortcut. For color and point of view, the sexist, stereotypical characters and cloying dialogue paint a picture of an author afraid to take risks. The other stories, a Stephen King-ish report on the end of the world, and a Meluselah narrative, continue to underestimate the audience's interpretive ability and the potential of language to convey the rather ominous statements that Willson is trying to get across. An unsatisfying project from some (apparently) well read people, judging by the contact list at the back. —Mikki (Ill Publishing, PO Box 170363, San Francisco, CA 94117-0363)

"THE SECRET LIFE OF A SATANIST: THE AUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY OF ANTON LAVEY"

by Blanche Barton; hardcover, 262 pgs, \$19.95
This book gives a glimpse into the dark and secretive life of the founder of the Church of Satan, Anton LaVey. Starting with his childhood, the author chronicles the events that influenced LaVey's way of thinking and later manifested themselves in his teachings and rituals. While most of the information documented is very interesting and the book, as a whole, is insightful, the author tends to jump around in time and can leave the reader feeling somewhat disconnected. This, however, is the only negative aspect in a truly entertaining story of one of the more interesting men alive.

The most interesting sections of the book are the ones that deal with the formation of the church and the backgrounds of the original founding members including filmmaker/author Kenneth Anger. From *A Topless Witches Review* (a vaudeville act that cast Susan Atkins as a vampire) to weekly lectures on witchcraft and lycanthropy to Church of Satan "grottos" worldwide, the growth of LaVey's organization is phenomenal.

LaVey's philosophies are the most valuable part of this book. Sometimes difficult to grasp but none-the-less fascinating. Satanism is presented in an easily embraceable package. Unlike other orthodox religions LaVey's Satanism is not sacrifice without much reward but instead appears to be reward without much sacrifice. It is presented as the liberator of inhibitions and doubt but of course indulgence is up to the reader. Various Satanic texts make up the appendix including the nine Satanic statements, the 11 Satanic rules of the earth, and the nine Satanic sins. Overall this is a great read though books authored by LaVey himself, the Satanic Witch especially, are considerably better written.

A few weeks after reading this book I came across an interview with LaVey in *Rolling Stone*. Blanche Barton, the author, is LaVey's live-in lover, which might explain why she was (unfortunately) chosen to write his biography. The article also goes on to discredit much of LaVey's background, including his associations with Marilyn Monroe, the San Francisco police Department, and others. When confronted with these inconsistencies LaVey is quoted as saying "I don't want the legend to disappear. There is a danger you will disenchant a lot of young people who use me as a role model." This paves the road for a new book: *Secret Life of a Satanist* part 2. —Kerin (Feral House, P.O. Box 861893, Los Angeles, CA 90086-1893)

COMING NEXT ISSUE: Joe Carducci's *Rock and the Pop Narcotic*, J.G. Eccarius' *We Should've Killed the King*, and more.